

Kateryna Novella's English Immersion Life Stories

9 anglických příběhů pro začátečníky

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katka@jazykovamentorka.cz

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Katka Havlová



Co máš před sebou

Tahle série povídek není běžná kniha. Je to **studijní materiál**, který ti pomáhá zvládnout základy angličtiny tak, abys je opravdu používala – nejen chápala v teorii.

Gramatika

- Na začátku najdeš jednoduché věty, základní přítomný čas prostý a průběhový.
- Pak postupně přidáme budoucí a základní minulý čas, ke konci i předpřítomný.
- Věty se pomalu prodlužují a gramatika se přidává plynule, vždy až ve chvíli, kdy se hodí k ději.

Slovní zásoba

Nejspíš si všimneš, že se v příběhu často opakují stejná slova a slovní spojení. Je to úmysl, abys stejné slovo nebo frázi viděla a slyšela v různých kontextech. Díky tomu:

- si to zapamatuješ **přirozeně**,
- začneš angličtinu používat **bez dlouhého přemýšlení**,
- nebudeš potřebovat překlad do češtiny, protože **porozumíš významu**.

Gradující příběhy

- Cílem první knihy je, abys měla pocit: „**Tomuhle rozumím. Tohle už umím.**“
- V dalších knihách se mírně zvyšuje obtížnost, aby ses naučila něco nového.
- Některé povídky jsou vzdušnější a delší, některé jsou hutnější a kratší.
- Vysvětlivky na každé stránce ti pomáhají nezaseknout se na slovíčkách a plynule celý příběh dočíst.

Tahle kniha se nežene za co největším množstvím slovíček ani za složitou gramatikou. Je postavená tak, aby ti pomohla upevnit základy, na kterých můžeš dál stavět.

První kniha vypráví o tom, co Kateryna Novella prožívá po vydání své první knížky.

Druhá kniha popisuje její život a jak postupně dospěla k rozhodnutí napsat román.

Třetí kniha je o jejím mládí, o zemi a době, ve které vyrostla a která ji ovlivnila.

Kateryna Novella

*English
Immersion
Life Stories*



Kateryna Novella's Coffee & First Wins

*3 short stories & audio
for beginners*

~1~

Story 1 - The Book Signing

My name is Kateryna Novella.

I am a writer.

I live in a small town near the sea.

My flat is on the third floor.

From my window I can see trees and a small park.

I like **quiet** mornings.

I like coffee, books and long walks.

Today is Saturday.

It is a big day for me.

I am in a bookshop in the town centre.

There are many people here.

They walk, they talk, they look at books.

The air **smells of** paper and coffee.

It is warm and nice.

I sit at a small table.

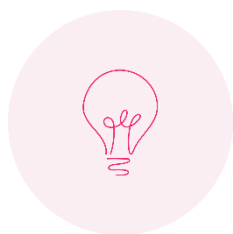
There is a white cup with tea, a black pen and a **pile** of books.

My name is on the cover.

The book is new.

It is my book.

I smile.



the book signing – autogramiáda, podepisování knih

quiet – klidné, tiché

to smell of something – něčím vonět

pile – hromada, stoh

to smile – usmát se

A woman comes to me.
She is tall and has short hair.
She gives me a book and says, "**Can you write my name, please?** I'm Ellena."
I write her name and my name.
I say, "Thank you."
She smiles and says, "Thank you. I like your stories."
I smile **too**.
My hands shake a little.
I am happy and shy at the same time.
More people come.
They bring books.
Some people **take photos**.
One man says, "My wife reads your book every evening."
I laugh.
I say, "That is lovely."



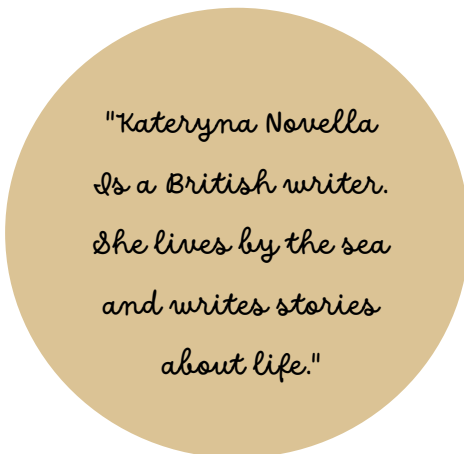
Can you write my name, please? - v této situaci: "napsat věnování"

too – také

to take photos – fotit se

to laugh – smát se (nejen usmívat)

I try to remember every face.
After one hour I am a little tired.
I still cannot believe it is me.
I take **one copy** of the book and open it.
On the first page there is a short text about me.
It says:



I read it two times.
I smile.
I think, "Yes, this is true. I write about life."
I touch the pages.
They are soft and smell of ink.
I remember my first **notebook**.
It was small and blue.
I wrote my first story there.
It was about a woman who starts again.
I like that story.
I think many women start again.



one copy – jeden výtisk

it says – je tam napsáno, píše se tam, stojí tam

notebook – sešit

A young girl comes to the table.
She has long brown hair and big eyes.
She says, "I want to write books **too**."
I say, "That is wonderful."
She asks, "Is it hard?"
I say, "Sometimes it is hard, but it is also very beautiful."
She smiles.
Her mother takes a photo.
I **wave** and say, "Good luck!"
After some time, the bookshop is **quiet**.
People go home.
I sit for a moment and **breathe** slowly.
My tea is cold now.
I look at the last book on the table.
I take my pen and open it.
I write a short note on the first page:
When I think about the last ten years, it still **feels unreal**.
Then I close the book and smile again.



to wave – mávat

to breathe – dýchat

it feels unreal – zdá se to neskutečné (působí to neskutečně, připadá to neskutečné)

It is late afternoon now.
The bookshop is empty.
I put my pen in my bag.
I put my scarf around my neck.
Outside, the air is cold.
It is early spring.
The trees have no leaves yet.
The sky is grey, but I can see a little sun.
I walk slowly to the bus stop.
My legs are tired, but I **feel light**.
I wear a blue dress and a long grey coat.
The coat is soft and warm.
I have black shoes and a pink bag.
In the bag there are two books and my **purse**.
The street **smells of** rain.
Cars move slowly.
People hurry home.



late afternoon – pozdní odpoledne

early spring – brzké, začínající jaro

light – lehký

When I come to my house, I open the door with my key.

The hall is **quiet**.

I walk up the stairs to the third floor.

I take off my coat and shoes.

I hang the coat on a hook.

I put my bag on the chair.

In my flat it is warm.

I open the window a little.

I can hear the sea.

I take off my blue dress.

I put on a white T-shirt and brown **trousers**.

They are clean and comfortable.

I tie my hair back.

I feel relaxed.

In the kitchen there is a **smell of** tea and bread.

I make hot water.

I cut a slice of bread and some cheese.

Sometimes I cook dinner, but not today.

I am **too** tired.

I have a small box of soup from a café.

It is tomato soup.

I warm it in a pan.

I sit at the table and eat slowly.

The soup is warm and sweet.

I drink tea after that.

I look out the window.

The **light** in the street is orange.



too – příliš (další význam kromě "také")

light – světlo

There is my new book on the table.

I open it again.

There is a picture of me on the **back cover**.

I look at it and smile.

I think, "Is this really me?"

After dinner I wash the cup and the plate.

I clean the table.

Then I go to my small living room.

There is a sofa, a lamp and many books.

I sit down and put a **blanket** over my shoulders.

I take my blue notebook.

I write a few words:

*"Today was a big day.
Many people came.
They smiled. They liked
my book. I am happy."*

I close the notebook.

Everything is **quiet** now.

I feel calm.

I think about tomorrow.

Maybe tomorrow I write again.

I turn off the lamp and go to bed.

My **blanket** is white with red roses, and the pillow is **light** blue.

I close my eyes.

I whisper, "Good night."



blanket – deka

back cover – zadní strana knihy, obálky

light – světlý

whisper – šeptat

LEARNING TIPS

kalhoty: trousers (UK) = pants (US)

peněženka: purse (UK) = wallet (US)

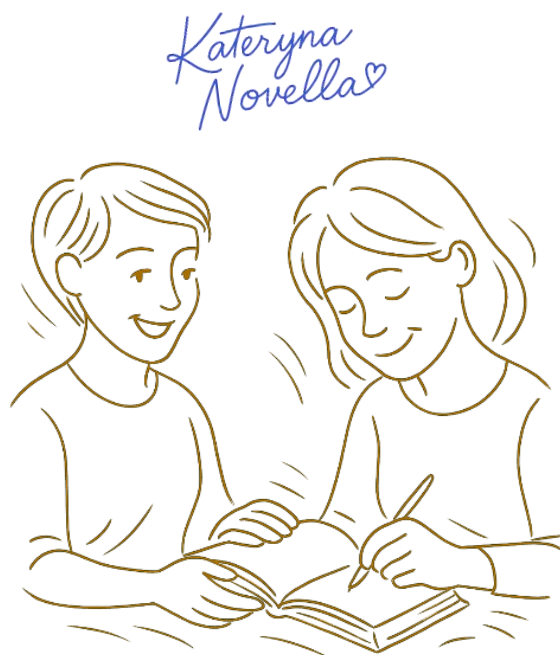
kabelka: handbag (UK) = purse (US)

byt: flat (UK) = apartment (US)

knihkupectví: bookshop (UK) = bookstore (US)

WHAT CAN YOU REMEMBER?

1. Jaké barvy a vůně se v příběhu objevují?
2. Jaké kusy nábytku jsou v příběhu popsány?
3. Jaké pocity Kateryna během dne zažívá?



Story 2 - Quiet Days

It is Sunday morning.

The sun is shining softly on the wall.

The room **smells of** coffee and books.

Kateryna is lying in bed.

She is not sleeping now.

She is looking at the light through the curtains.

Everything **feels slow** and kind.

She turns her head and sees her notebook on the table.

It is open.

The words from yesterday are still there:

“Today was a big day.”

She smiles.

She feels calm now.

She is getting up slowly.

She is opening the window.

Fresh air is coming in.

She hears the sound of **seagulls**.

The sea is not far away.

She closes her eyes for a moment.

The wind is soft on her face.



seagull(s) – racek, racci

Now she is making coffee.
She is boiling water and cutting a small piece of bread.
She is **spreading** butter on it.
She is sitting by the window and drinking her coffee.
The sky is light blue.
Children are playing in the park.
A man is walking his dog.
An old couple is sitting on a bench.
Kateryna likes watching them.
She is writing a **list** on a small paper:
milk, apples, candles, new notebook.
She likes small notebooks.
She has many, all in different colours.
After breakfast, she is taking a shower.
The water is warm.
She is **humming** a song.
Then she is putting on jeans and a soft green sweater.
Her hair is still wet.
She is brushing it and smiling in the mirror.
She is taking her bag and going out.
The air smells of salt and flowers.



spreading – roztírat

to walk a dog – venčiť psa

list – seznam

to hum – broukat si

She is walking to the market.
People are talking, laughing, selling things.
A woman is cutting cheese.
A boy is shouting "Fresh bread!"
Kateryna is buying apples and a **candle**.
She is talking with the **seller**.
He says, "Your accent is nice. Where are you from?"
She smiles and says, "From the Czech Republic."
He says, "Ah, Czechia, Prague! I want to go there."
She laughs.
She says, "It is a beautiful city."
She is walking home and thinking about her old home.
About her mother's kitchen.
She remembers the smell of **apple pie**.
She says **quietly**, "Maybe I can bake it next week."
In the afternoon, she is sitting at her desk.
She is reading letters from readers.
One says, "Your story helped me start writing."
Kateryna closes her eyes for a moment.
She feels warm inside.



candle – svíčka

seller – prodejce

apple pie – jablečný koláč, i štrůdl

She is writing a short **reply**:

“Thank you for reading. Keep writing. Your words **matter**.”

The day is passing slowly.

She is cooking simple dinner, pasta and vegetables.

The radio is playing soft music.

The sun is going down.

The sky is pink and gold.

Kateryna is sitting by the window.

She is not in a hurry.

After dinner, she is lighting her new candle.

The small **flame** dances.

She is opening her notebook.

She is writing a few lines:

*"Sometimes
the world is big.
Sometimes it is only this
room. But I am still here,
and I am still
writing."*

She closes the notebook and sits quietly.

The candle is burning slowly.

She is looking at the light.

She feels peace.



reply – odpověď

something matters – na něčem záleží

flame – plamen

It is Monday morning.
It's raining. The street is wet.
Kateryna is sitting with her tea, watching the rain.
The day feels different.
She is thinking about a new story.
She opens her notebook and writes:
"A woman is walking in the rain. Slowly. She is lost."
She stops.
She looks at the sentence.
She smiles.
"Yes," she says quietly, "this is the beginning."
The phone is ringing.
Her friend Anna is calling.
"Hi, Kateryna! How was the book signing?"
Kateryna is laughing.
"It was wonderful," she says.
"They were so kind. I was nervous, but now I am happy."
Anna says, "You are a real author now!"
Kateryna smiles.
"I am, **aren't I?**" she answers.
They both laugh.



..., **aren't I?** – záporná otázka za kladnou větou znamená "že ano?"

Příklad: You are hungry, aren't you? - Máš hlad, že? She is nice, isn't she? - Ona je milá, že ano?

After the call, she is walking to her **bookshelf**.
She touches her favourite books.
Each book feels like a friend.
She is taking one and opening it.
Inside there is an old photo – Kateryna as a young woman, standing by a train.
She is smiling in the photo.
She remembers that day – the day she left her country.
The smell of the train, the sound of wheels, the feeling of **fear** and freedom.
She whispers, “That was the real beginning.”
Now she is sitting again at her desk.
She is writing a few more lines in her notebook.
She is not writing fast.
Outside, the rain is stopping.
A little sun is coming through the clouds.
The light touches her hands.
She stops writing and looks outside.
She smiles.



bookshelf – police, regál na knihy, knihovnička

fear – strach

It is Tuesday evening.
Kateryna is making soup and cutting bread.
She is putting the candle on the table.
The small flame is shining again.
She is eating slowly and thinking about her story.
She feels thankful for these quiet days.
She writes one more note before going to bed:

*"The book signing
was one day. But the quiet
days are my real life.
This is where all my
stories begin."*

She puts down her pen.
She closes the notebook.
She **turns off** the light.
Outside, the sea is calm.
Kateryna whispers, "Good night," and the candle **goes out**.



to turn off (the light) – vypnout / zhasnout
(candle) **goes out** – zhasne, dohoří

LEARNING TIPS

Odlišný spelling, stejný význam:

favourite (UK) = favorite (US)

neighbour (UK) = neighbor (US)

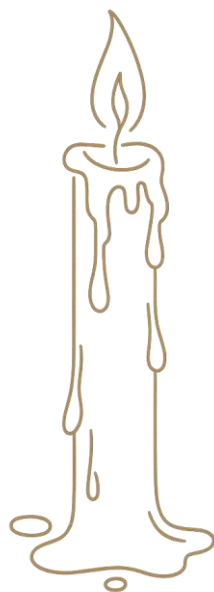
colour (UK) = color (US)

centre (UK) = center (US)

grey (UK) = gray (US)

WHAT CAN YOU REMEMBER?

1. Jaké dny v týdnu se vyskytují v textu? Které chybí?
2. Co napovídá tomu, že Kateryna bydlí blízko moře?
3. Na co si vzpomene, když cítí vůni jablečného koláče?



Story 3 - Next Step

It is Wednesday morning.

The sun is shining softly through the window.

The room **smells of** tea and paper.

Kateryna is sitting at her desk with a cup in her hand.

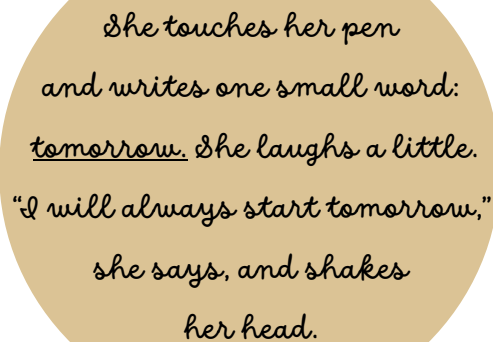
The tea is warm.

Her notebook is open, but the page is still white.

She looks at it and smiles.

She is thinking about what to write next.

She says quietly, "I don't know what I will write, but I will start today."



*She touches her pen
and writes one small word:
tomorrow. She laughs a little.
"I will always start tomorrow,"
she says, and shakes
her head.*

She looks out of the window.

The sky is blue, the air is bright.

A woman is walking her dog.

Children are going to school.

A man is cleaning his small shop across the street.

Life is starting again.

Kateryna feels part of it.

She goes to the kitchen.
She is making new tea.
The kettle is boiling, and she likes the sound.
The **smell of** mint fills the air.
She looks at the calendar on the wall.
The new month begins next week.
She says to herself, "I will travel soon. I will go **somewhere warm.**"
The thought **makes** her smile.
After breakfast she takes her bag and goes outside.
The street is full of light.
The bakery smells like fresh bread.
The air is cool but friendly.
Kateryna walks slowly to the park.
She likes walking and thinking.
She says in her head, "I will write about walking. It helps me think."
She sits on a bench under a tree.
Leaves are moving above her head.
She opens her notebook and starts writing.
It says: "I will write a new story. It will be about **courage**. And about hope. It will be about my life"



somewhere warm – někam, kde je teplo, někam do tepla

courage – odvaha, kuráž

An old man sits down on the same bench.
He smiles at her and says, “**Nice morning.**”
“Yes,” Kateryna answers, “the sun **feels good** today.”
He **nods**. “Are you writing something?”
She laughs. “I am **trying to.**”
He says, “Then you are a writer.”
She shakes her head. “Maybe one day.”
The man stands up slowly and says, “I think you already are.”
He walks away.
Kateryna smiles after him.
In the afternoon she meets Anna at their favourite café.
Anna **waves** when she sees her.
They **hug** and sit down.
The waiter brings two cappuccinos.
Anna says, “So, what will you do now? Another book?”
Kateryna laughs. “Maybe. I will rest a bit first. Then I will start again.”
Anna smiles. “You always say that. But you never stop.”
Kateryna laughs. “You are right, Anna.”



nice morning – není pozdrav, ale prohlášení, proto je odpověď "yes"
(při setkání: "good morning"; na rozloučenou: "Have a nice morning")

to nod – kývat, přikývnout

to hug – obejmout, **a hug** – objetí

They talk about small things — books, food, friends, the sea.
Time passes quietly.
When they leave the café, the sky is changing colour.
The sun is low.
They walk through the park together.
The air **smells of** grass.
A small boy is running with a red balloon.
Then they **hug goodbye** near the corner.
Anna says, "Call me tomorrow."
Kateryna answers, "I will."
That night Kateryna lights a candle in her flat.
The small flame dances in the quiet air.
She sits by the window and opens her notebook again.
She reads her words: "I will start a new story."
She adds a new line: "I will make it simple and true."
She drinks tea and listens to the sounds of the street.
Somebody is playing the guitar far away.
The light from the candle moves on the wall.
She feels calm.



to hug goodbye – obejmout se na rozloučenou
to say goodbye – rozloučit se

She looks at her bookshelf.

There are many books, but one is missing — she gave it to Anna.

She smiles.

She whispers, "I will write another one soon."

Then she writes a **list** of ideas:

"I will write about
the sea. I will write
about voices in my head.
And about small things
that make life
beautiful."

She stops and looks at the **list**.

She laughs softly. "It will **take years**," she says.

Then she adds: "I will have time."

She closes the notebook and goes to bed.

Before she sleeps, she says, "Tomorrow will be a good day."



to take years – to potrvá roky, to zabere roky

to take + time – nějakou dobu trvat, zabrat

On Wednesday morning, Kateryna wakes up early.
She opens the window.
It's cold and it's raining again.
She is making coffee, listening to the radio.
A voice says, "The weather will change today."
Kateryna smiles and answers to the radio, "**Hopefully!**"
She sits down and opens her notebook again.
Her pen moves slowly.
She writes: "A woman wakes up and decides to live her dream."
Then she gets up, takes her coat and goes out.
People are walking fast with umbrellas.
Kateryna walks slowly **without one**.
The rain touches her hair and face.
She feels free.
She is walking to the sea.
It is not far.
The wind is strong, but she doesn't mind.
She stands near the water.
Waves are coming and going.
She closes her eyes and breathes deeply.
The world **feels wide** and open.
She smiles.



hopefully – doufejme!

without one – zástupné "one", aby se nemuselo opakovat již zmíněné slovo "umbrella"

waves – vlny (také 3. Os. j.č. "mává" - význam se odlišuje kontextem)

A woman next to her says, "Beautiful, **isn't it?**"

Kateryna nods. "Yes. I love it."

They both look at the sea for a long time.

In the evening, she is back home.

Her hair is wet from the rain, but her eyes are **bright**.

She changes clothes, makes soup, and lights another candle.

She opens her notebook once more.

She writes:

"I will continue. I will write about my life. I don't want to forget my past.

I want to remember my family and my friends."

She closes the blue notebook gently.

The **candlelight** moves on her face.

Outside, the wind is quiet now.

Kateryna is drinking her tea.

She whispers, "Yes. This will be my next step."



candlelight – světlo svíčky

LEARNING TIPS

Přítomný čas prostý pro rozvrhy/kalendář

„The new month begins next week.“ (nepoužívá se "will")

= stejné jako v češtině: "příští týden začíná nový měsíc"

smell(s) of something / taste(s) like something

„The bakery smells like fresh bread. The smell of mint fills the air.“

= vonět jako, vonět po něčem / chutnat jako, chutnat po něčem

Feel(s) + přídavné jméno (nikdy příslovce)

„She feels free. The sun feels good. The world feels wide.“

= cítit se, působit svobodná, vypadat krásně (česky může být příd. jméno, i příslovce)

POZOR: I feel good – cítím se dobře, I feel well – cítím se zdravě

WHAT CAN YOU REMEMBER?

1. Jaká místa Kateryna během dne navštíví?
2. Jaké zvuky nebo pohyby se v příběhu objevují?
3. Co si Kateryna slibuje/napíše do sešitu ohledně svého psaní?



*English
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Kateryna Novella's Home & Heartbeats

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~2~

Story 4 - The Wedding

It is morning, 25 years before Kateryna's first book signing.

The room is quiet.

Light is coming through the curtains.

Kateryna is sitting on the bed.

Her hands are warm and a little shaky.

She is breathing in and out, slowly.

On the chair there is a simple white dress.

On the table there is a small **bouquet** with white flowers and green leaves.

A cup of tea is next to the flowers.

She takes the cup and smiles.

She is washing her face.

She is brushing her hair.

She is putting on light **make-up**.

Just brown mascara and a **gloss** on her lips.

She is opening the window.

Fresh air is coming in.

Birds are singing somewhere in a tree.



bouquet – puget, kytice

make-up – líčení, nalíčení (není to "krycí krém", jako v češtině)

gloss – lesk (**lip gloss** – lesk na rty)

Her phone is ringing.

She is answering.

“Good morning, Mum,” she says.

Her mother is speaking with a warm voice.

“Good morning, my girl. Are you ready?”

“I am ready,” Kateryna says and laughs.

“I am a little nervous, but it is a good feeling.”

They are talking for a few minutes.

They are saying simple things.



“I am thinking of you.”

“I am happy for you.”

“I am sending a hug.”

Then they say goodbye for now.

Kateryna is wearing a white dress now.

It is soft and light.

She is looking in the mirror.

She is not a princess, she thinks.

Just a young happy woman.

There is a knock on the door.

Her friend Anna is here.

Anna is wearing a blue dress and a big smile.

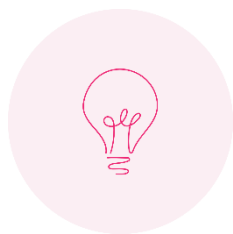
“You look beautiful,” Anna says.

“Thank you,” says Kateryna.

“Are you ready?”

“I am ready.”

They are walking down the stairs.
They are going outside.
The air is fresh.
A small car is waiting near the gate.
Inside, there is a **ribbon** on the mirror.
Anna is driving carefully.
The town is waking up.
Shops are opening.
A woman is **sweeping the pavement**.
Children are running with backpacks.
The sky is blue with small white clouds.
They are arriving at the small church.
It is old, with a **square** tower.
Roses are growing near the stone wall.
A **blackbird** is hopping on the grass.
A few friends are standing by the door.
They are waving and smiling.
David is standing there too. A **proud groom**.
He is wearing a dark suit.
He looks calm and happy.
His hair is a little grey.
His eyes are green and shining.



ribbon – stužka, mašle

to sweep the pavement – zametat chodník

square – čtverec, čtvercový (další význam je "náměstí")

blackbird – kos

proud groom – hrdý ženich

He is taking her hands.

"You are here," he says softly.

"I am here," she answers.

For a moment they are just standing and breathing.

Inside the church it is cool and quiet.

Light is falling through coloured glass.

A woman is playing a slow song on a small **organ**.

They are walking forward, **side by side**.

They are holding hands.

The vicar is speaking with a kind voice.

He is saying simple words.

"We are here for love. We are here **to make a promise**."

Kateryna is listening.

David is listening.

Everyone is quiet.

*"Do you, David,
take Kateryna...?"*

*"I do," he says,
and he is smiling.*

*"Do you, Kateryna,
take David...?"*

"I do," she says.

Her voice is clear and soft.

This is not like her first wedding, she thinks.



organ – varhany

side by side – bok po boku

to make a promise – složit slib

Anna is giving them two gold rings.
They are putting the rings on.
The rings are bright in the light.
They are touching hands again.
They are looking into each other's eyes.
The vicar **is blessing** them.
Friends are clapping.
Someone is laughing.
Someone is **wiping** a happy **tear**.
They are signing the book.
They are holding the pen together for a second and smiling.
A small bell is ringing outside.
They are walking out of the church.
The air is warmer now.
People are throwing little paper hearts.
Children are shouting, "Hooray!"
A camera is clicking.
They are taking photos with friends, **two by two**.
David is hugging his sister.
Kateryna is hugging Anna.
Everyone is smiling.



to bless – požehnat, **blessing** – požehnání

to wipe – utřít

tear – slza

two by two – po dvou, po dvojicích; **one by one** – po jednom

They are going to a small café near the square.
 The owner is waving and saying, "Congratulations!"
 A long wooden table is waiting for them.
 On the table there are plates with sandwiches, small cakes, strawberries, and a big pot of tea.
 And also, a bottle of **sparkling** wine.
 They are sitting close together.
 They are talking and laughing.
 They are **raising their glasses**.
 "To love," someone says.
 "To kindness," says another voice.
 "To a quiet life," says David, and he is looking at Kateryna.
 "To a good, honest life," she answers, and they **cling their glasses**.
 A little boy is walking to Kateryna with a red balloon.
 "For the **bride**," he says.
 "Thank you," she says and ties the balloon to her chair.
 The **ribbon** is moving in the soft air.
 Later, they are walking to their new home.
 It is a small house on a short street near the park.
 The door is green.
 A small tree is growing in a pot by the steps.
 David is opening the door.
 "Welcome," he says.
 "Welcome home," she says back.



sparkling – šumivé, bublinkové (víno, voda)

to raise glasses – pozvednout číše

to cling glasses – přituknout si

bride – nevěsta

Inside, everything is simple and warm.
There is a sofa with a grey blanket.
There is a shelf with books and some old photos.
The kitchen is small but bright.
A bowl with oranges is on the table.
The kettle is standing ready to make their tea.
Their two cups are **next to each other** on the shelf.
They look like a **bride and groom**: together, kind and happy.
David is making tea.
He is moving in a slow, careful way.
He is putting two slices of lemon on a plate.
“Do you want lemon or milk?” he asks.
“Milk, please,” she says.
They are walking from room to room together.
In the bedroom, the bed is simple and white.
The window overlooks a small garden.
There is grass, and a wooden chair, and one **rose bush**.
She is opening the window.
Fresh air is coming in.
The smell of grass is coming in, too.
They are standing **next to each other** and looking out.
“It is small,” she says.
“It is ours,” he says.



next to each other = side by side – jeden vedle druhého
rose bush – růžový keř

They are **hanging** two photos on the wall.
One is an old sea photo from his family.
One is a small picture from her country: a river, a bridge, a tower.
The afternoon is passing slowly.
They are walking to the park.
They are holding hands.
Children are playing on the grass.
A dog is running in circles.
A woman is reading on a bench.
They are sitting on another bench in the sun.
They are not in a hurry.
They are making a small **list**:
“Coat hook,” she writes.
“Two pillows,” he says.
“**Basil** for the kitchen,” she adds.
They are both smiling.
On the way home they are buying milk and bread.
They are carrying the bag together.
The sky is changing colour now.
The light is soft and golden.
The air is cooler.



to hang – pověsit, věšet

basil – bazalka

They are talking about their dreams.

He asks, "What place in the world do you love?"

She smiles. "I love the sea. Always the sea."

He nods. "Me too. The sea is peace."

They look **at each other**.

Then she asks, "Where will we go for our **honeymoon**?"

*He says,
"Let's go to Italy.
Warm air, small streets,
good coffee." She laughs.
"And no rain
for a week."*

"We don't need a lot of clothes," he continues.

They are putting a small bag on the bed.

She is **folding** a dress, a light scarf, a book.

He is bringing two shirts and a camera.

They are laughing because the suitcase is already full.

"Too many books," he says.

"Too many shirts," she answers.

The candle is still burning on the table.

They are quiet for a moment, looking at the suitcase like it is a promise.

They are smiling.



honeymoon – líbánky, svatební cesta

to fold – složit, skládat

LEARNING TIPS

novomanželé – newlyweds / the married couple

svědek/svědkyně – witness

družičky – bridesmaids

ženichův družba – best man

oddací list – marriage certificate

snubní prsteny – wedding rings

závoj – veil

vlečka – train (neobvyklé, ale není to chyba)

korsáž/kytička do klop – buttonhole (UK) / boutonniere (US)

svatební hostina – reception

svatební dort – wedding cake

I do – při svatebním obřadu "ano"

WHAT CAN YOU REMEMBER?

1. S použitím slov a frází v tomto příběhu, dokážeš popsat svou svatbu?
2. Můžeš také popsat svatbu, kde jsi byla za svědka nebo za družičku.
3. Organizovala jsi někdy nějakou svatbu? Komu a proč? Jaké to bylo?



Story 5 - Family Life

It was early September.

The air was cool in the morning, and the sky was light blue.

Emma and Oliver were ready for a new school year.

Their grey uniforms lay on the sofa.

I made toast and packed simple lunches.

We checked their school bags: **lunch boxes**, water bottles, **and PE kits**.

“Ready?” I asked.

They nodded, and we walked to school together.

Our regular school year started.

In the mornings we looked for missing socks and homework.

Sometimes we got a school letter about a trip, **a book fair, a dress-up day**.

In the afternoons we talked about teachers, friends, and playground games.

Some days Emma came home tired and quiet.

Some days Oliver ran into the house and talked without stopping.

Life was busy, but it was our family life.

My husband David came home from work in the evening.

He put his bag down and listened to the children.

Sometimes they climbed on his lap and told him about a funny thing from school.

Sometimes he helped with **a maths sheet or a spelling list**.



book fair – knižní veletrh ve škole

dress-up day – den, kdy děti přijdou do školy v kostýmech (maškarní)

lunch box – krabička na svačinu (na oběd)

PE kit – cvičební úbor (tričko, šortky, tenisky)

maths sheet – pracovní list z matematiky

spelling list – seznam slov, která se děti učí
správně psát (na test / diktát)

At weekends we often saw more of our family.
 My friend became "**aunt** Anna" for our kids.
 She lived not far from us.
 Oliver and Emma loved her because she always had time for them.
 Sometimes she took them to the park and pushed them high on the **swings**.
 When she read **bedtime stories**, she made funny voices, and everyone laughed.
 Anna also had two children; we were like one big family.
 Mia and Thomas were **cousins** to Emma and Oliver, and **niece** and **nephew** to me and David.
 On some Saturdays all four children played in our living room.
 They built towers from **blocks** and made a little house from **cushions** and blankets.
 On warm days they ran in the garden and played football.
Now and then one cousin stayed for a **sleepover**.
 They watched a film, ate popcorn, and whispered in the dark until they fell asleep.
 The **grandparents** were also part of our big family.
 My mum and dad lived in the Czech Republic.
 For Emma and Oliver, they were Grandma and Grandad from Brno.
 David's parents lived in England, only one hour away by car.
 They were Grandma and Grandad from Kent.



swings – houpačky

bedtime stories – pohádky na dobrou noc

blocks – dětské kostky / stavebnice

cushions – polštáře do obývacího (sedací / dekorační)

now and then = sometimes (občas)

sleepover – přespání u kamaráda

aunt – teta

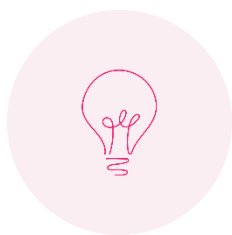
cousins – bratrance, sestřenice

niece – neteř

nephew – synovec

grandparents – prarodiče

Grandma and Grandad from Kent came for Sunday lunch once a month.
They brought a cake in a **tin** and fresh flowers for the table.
Grandad asked, "How is school?"
Emma told him about her **art club**.
Oliver told him about football and **PE**.
After lunch we all went for a short walk.
Grandma and Grandad from Brno could not visit so often.
They lived far away, but we saw them on video calls.
We sat on the sofa with the phone between us.
"Jak se máte?" they asked.
Emma and Oliver spoke in Czech with them.
"We are fine, Grandma! Hi, Grandad!" They said and waved.
Before Christmas, a box came from Brno.
It was full of sweets, warm socks, and small books in Czech.
The box smelled like home.
We opened it and read Grandma's letter.
She wrote, "I miss you. Come home soon."
We put the letter and a photo of my parents on the fridge.



tin – plechová dóza s víkem

art club – výtvarný kroužek

PE = Physical Education – tělocvik

School also brought special days.

In autumn there was a **book fair** in the school hall.

Tables were full of new stories.

“Can we choose one?” Emma asked.

“**One each**,” I said.

She chose a story about a girl and a fox.

Oliver chose a book about **space** with big pictures and simple facts.

That evening we read on the sofa under a grey blanket.

In December the school sang **carols**.

Children stood in rows with red cheeks.

The teacher played the **keyboard**, and small voices filled the hall.

I watched Emma and Oliver and **kept my fingers crossed for them**.

Parents wiped their eyes and smiled.

After the concert, family came back to our house.

Aunt Anna and the cousins arrived with a **tin** of homemade biscuits.

Grandma and Grandad from Kent brought a big box with a toy inside.

We drank tea, ate **ginger biscuits**, and talked about **Christmas break**.

The children showed everyone the **decorations** they made at school.



one each – jednu pro každého, každý jednu

space – vesmír – planety (také prostor)

keyboard – elektrické piano (doslova "klávesnice")

to keep fingers crossed for... – držet někomu palce; přát si, aby se jim to povedlo

carols – koledy

ginger biscuits – perníčky

Christmas break – vánoční prázdniny

decorations – výzdoba, ozdoby

At Easter we had another family day.

We painted eggs in bright colours and hid them in the garden for an **Easter egg hunt**.

The children ran with **baskets** and shouted when they found one.

Grandma and Grandad from Kent came with chocolate eggs.

Grandma and Grandad from Brno sent a card with flowers and chocolate by post.

We put the card on the shelf above the TV.

During a **half-term break**, we took a bus to the seaside.

We held hands in the wind and wrote our names in the wet sand.

We bought **fish and chips** and ate them from a paper box with small wooden forks.

On the bus back the children fell asleep on my shoulders.

I felt tired and **grateful**.

In the summer holidays we finally visited my parents.

We flew on a plane to the Czech Republic, and they met us at the airport.

Grandma hugged us all.

Grandad took the bags and said, "You are taller again!"

At their house they made **pancakes** and tea.

The children played in the garden and picked **raspberries**.

Cousins from my side of the family came to visit too.

Emma and Oliver learned new Czech words from them.

They played games in two languages and laughed when they mixed them.



grateful – vděčná

pancakes – palačinky

raspberries – maliny

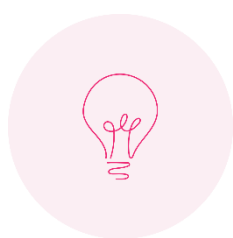
Easter egg hunt – hledání velikonočních vajíček

baskets – košíky

half-term break – prázdniny (pololetní, jarní)

fish and chips – smažená ryba s hranolky
(typické britské jídlo)

When we went back to England, my parents gave us apples and small presents.
“**See you next year,**” they said.
The children waved and said, “Bye, Grandma! Bye, Grandad!”
On the plane they whispered, “We will call them tomorrow.”
Back at home, the school year slowly came to an end.
The children practised songs for an **end-of-year assembly**.
On the day, parents filled the hall again.
The **headteacher** spoke about learning and courage.
The children sang about friendship and about being brave in the future.
We clapped until our hands felt warm.
In the last week, **school reports** came home in white envelopes.
During the year they often got **marks** with letters like A, B, or C on their work, but the report used simple words and comments.
Emma’s report said that she was a strong reader and asked brave questions.
Oliver’s report said that he was lively and kind and tried his best.
We put both reports on the fridge with magnets next to our family photos.
That night, when the house was quiet, I made tea and opened my notebook.
I wrote one line: “My children are growing. Our whole family is growing with them.”
I closed the notebook and listened to the soft sounds of our home.



See you next year! – Ahoj za rok!

end-of-year assembly – školní slavnost na konci roku; besídka

headteacher – ředitel / ředitelka školy (UK)

school reports – vysvědčení (v UK dostávají ústní hodnocení)

marks – známky (v UK dostávají hodnocení pomocí písmen)

LEARNING TIPS

christening / baptism – křest, křtiny

(to) be baptised – být pokřtěný

godmother – kmotra

godfather – kmotr

(to) get engaged – zasnoubit se

engaged – zasnoubený(á), **engaged** – zasnoubený, snoubenka

marriage – manželství

(to) get married – vzít se / vdát se, oženit se

divorce – rozvod

(to) get divorced – rozvést se

divorced – rozvedený / rozvedená

single – svobodný / svobodná (bez partnera)

widower – vdovec, to become a widower

widow – vdova, to become a widow

widowed – ovdovělý / ovdovělá

WHAT CAN YOU REMEMBER?

Can you describe your family life? Keep it simple!

Popiš jednoduše svůj rodinný život...

Stačí ti slovíčka z tohoto příběhu?

Když zjistíš, že ti nějaké slovíčko nebo fráze chybí,
napiš do FB skupiny, kde poskytují zdarma podporu
pro všechny mé čtenářky.

Katka 💕💕

Story 6 - The Goodbye

It was a quiet morning. The house was **still**.
The clock was ticking in the kitchen.
David was gone. He died in the hospital last week.
The doorbell rang. It was David's sister Karen.
She lived in another country, but she flew here to be with me.
Her face looked very tired.
"I'm so sorry," she said. "I **still** can't believe my brother is dead."
We hugged in the doorway.
We were both crying.
We went to the kitchen and made tea.
We sat at the table.
On the table there was David's life on paper: ID, passport and driver's licence.
And his death certificate.
I hated those papers, but they were important.
"We must plan the funeral," I said.
"Yes," Karen said quietly.
Her hands were shaking a little.
We made a list:

*Call the funeral home,
coffin, flowers, music,
call friends and family,
write the funeral notice.*



the goodbye – rozloučení

still – klidný, tichý, nehybný / **still** – stále ještě (dál to trvá)

ID, passport, driver's licence – občanka, pas, řidičák

“Do you want a **service** in a church?” Karen asked.

“I don’t know,” I answered.

“He was not very religious, but our parents had a church funeral.” Karen added.

We sat in silence for a moment.

The kettle was making a soft sound.

“I think we can have a short service in the church,” I said. “Not long. Just some music, one short speech, and a **prayer**.”

She nodded. “Yes. A simple ceremony is good.”

In the afternoon we went to the **funeral home**.

The room was cold and quiet.

A woman in a dark suit spoke to us.

She was calm and polite.

“I’m very sorry for your loss,” she said.

She showed us pictures of **coffins**.

Wooden, light, dark.

We chose a simple wooden coffin with white flowers.

She asked about music.

We chose one slow song he liked and one soft song for the end.

She asked about clothes for David.

We decided on a dark suit and a white shirt.

“We will **take care of** everything,” the woman said. “The service will be on Tuesday at ten o’clock.”



service / church service – bohoslužba

prayer – modlitba

funeral home – pohřební ústav

coffin – rakev

to take care of ... – postarat se o...

When we came home, the house felt very full and very empty at the same time.

"We also have to decide what to do with his things," I said.

I pointed to the **wardrobe**.

His shirts, trousers and shoes were still there.

"We can start with one box," Karen said.

We wrote three words on the boxes:

keep,

give away,

throw away.

We put the boxes on the floor.

We were working slowly.

Sometimes we were talking.

Sometimes we were quiet.

"This T-shirt is from our last holiday," I said and pressed it to my face. "I must keep this one," I whispered.

Then the kids joined us.

Oliver took a deep breath and opened a **drawer**.

He found a small box with **cufflinks**.

"They were his favourite," he said. "Can I keep them?"

"Yes, of course," I said, and my voice shook a little.

We started with shirts.

"This blue one is still new," Emma said.

"He wore it only once," I answered.

"For your school concert," Oliver said, and he smiled at Emma.

We put the blue shirt in the "keep" box.



wardrobe – šatní skříň

keep – (po)nechat si

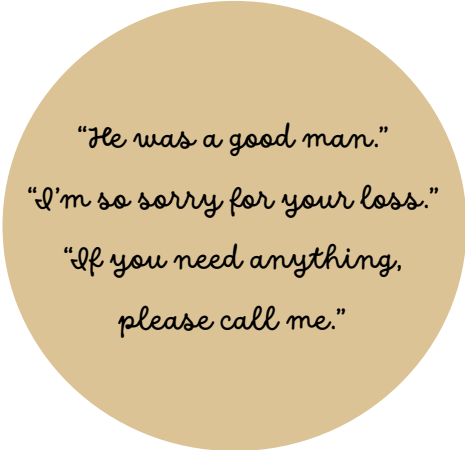
give away – rozdat, darovat

throw away – vyhodit

drawer – zásuvka, šuplík

cufflinks – manžetové knoflíčky

That night I could not sleep.
I was thinking about the **funeral**.
I was afraid of that day.
On Tuesday, the sky was grey.
People were wearing black clothes.
We were standing in front of the church.
The coffin was in a black car.
White flowers were on the top of the **coffin**.
We walked behind the car to the church.
Inside, people were sitting on long benches.
Some people were crying quietly.
Some people were just looking down.
The **priest** was speaking slowly.
He was saying, "We are here to say goodbye. We remember David with love."
We sang one simple song.
We walked to the coffin and put flowers on it.
Many people came to us after the **service**.
They said the same simple sentences:



*"He was a good man."
"I'm so sorry for your loss."
"If you need anything,
please call me."*

Some people hugged me.
Some people just took my hand.
David's sister stood next to me all the time.
Sometimes I felt that she was supporting me.
Sometimes I felt that I was supporting her.

After the funeral we went back home.
We made tea and sat at the table.
“We did one hard thing today,” I said.
“Yes,” Karen said.
“The next hard thing is to live without him.”
After lunch we went to **the study**.
The desk was clean, but the **drawer** was full of papers.
There were letters, bills, a map, and a postcard from our honeymoon.
We made more **piles**: papers, photos, letters.
When the light changed in the afternoon, we moved to the garage.
It smelled of wood and oil.
His tools were hanging on a board.
A red **toolbox** sat on a shelf.
“He taught me how **to fix** the shelf,” Oliver said.
“I remember,” I said.
We decided to keep the tools.
We wiped the **dust** from the red box and put it by the door.
Back in the living room we stopped.
The boxes were half full.
The house was half lighter.
We sat on the floor together.
The air felt warm and we were tired.
“We did well,” Emma said.
“We did,” I answered.
“The rest can wait,” Oliver said, and I nodded.
“Yes. The rest can wait.” Karen agreed.



the study – pracovna (domáci, studovna)

toolbox – kufřík s nářadím

to fix something – opravit

dust – prach

That night the house was quiet.
 I stood by the bedroom door for a long time.
 His side of the wardrobe looked so sad when it was empty.
 I opened my notebook.
 The page was white, and the pen was heavy.
 I wrote a simple line:
 "We were sorting his things today. We were holding our love in our hands."
 I closed the notebook and went to bed.
 The next day, I **still** couldn't work.
I kept busy: cleaning, dusting and vacuuming.
 After lunch, the doorbell rang.
 Our **neighbour** stood there with a warm pie.
 "It's for you," she said, and smiled.
 I thanked her and invited her in.
 She did not stay long.
 Before she left, she said, "He was a good man. We miss him."
 In the afternoon I sat at the table with a small box of **sympathy cards**.
 I read each one again.
So sorry for your loss.
He will be remembered.
We are thinking of you.
 I like this one the most: *Love does not end; it changes **shape**.*
 I put the cards in the box and tied a ribbon around it.
 When I wrote it in my notebook that night, the pen was shaking, and the candle was crying small tears of **wax**.



to keep busy – zabavit se něčím, být zaneprázdněná

neighbour – soused(ka)

sympathy cards – kondolenční lístky

shape – tvar, podoba

wax – vosk

On Friday we went to the **charity shop** with two boxes.
The woman at the **counter** smiled and said, "Thank you."
She was gentle with the clothes.
She was putting them on the shelf in a careful way.
I felt a soft pain and a soft **relief** at the same time.
Back at home, we made tea and sat on the floor in the living room.
"We are not saying goodbye *to him* today," I said. "We are saying goodbye *to things*."
Oliver nodded.
Emma looked at me and spoke very simply: "He is part of us. We are part of him."
We were together in our pain.
We sat without speaking.
When the evening came, we lit a candle.
A small, **still** flame was with us in the quiet room.
The garden was dark.
A light rain was falling again.
I opened my notebook and wrote:

"Tomorrow
we will **keep going**.
We will plant a new flower.
We will let the light in."



charity shop – dobročinný obchod

counter – pult v obchodě

relief – úleva

keep going – pokračovat dál

LEARNING TIPS

funeral – pohřeb

funeral service – pohřební obřad

funeral home – pohřební ústav, pohřební služba

cemetery / graveyard – hřbitov

grave – hrob

coffin – rakev

urn – urna

wreath – věnec

death – smrt

funeral notice – parte, oznámení o pohřbu

sympathy – soucit, účast

sympathy card – kondolenční lístek

to die – zemřít

dead – mrtvý / mrtvá

death certificate – úmrtní list

last will / testament – poslední vůle, závěť

I'm sorry for your loss - upřímnou soustrast

Ashes to ashes, dust to dust

*

Prach jsi a v prach se obrátíš

*

z křesťanského obřadu

WHAT DO YOU THINK?

Myslíš, že Kateryna zůstane s dětmi v domě po Davidově smrti, nebo se raději někam přestěhují? Jaké jsou důvody? Jaké jsou pro a proti?

Můžeš použít:

I think (that)... – myslím, že...

I don't think (that)... – nemyslím si, že...

Maybe... – možná...

I'm sure (that)... – jsem si jistá, že...

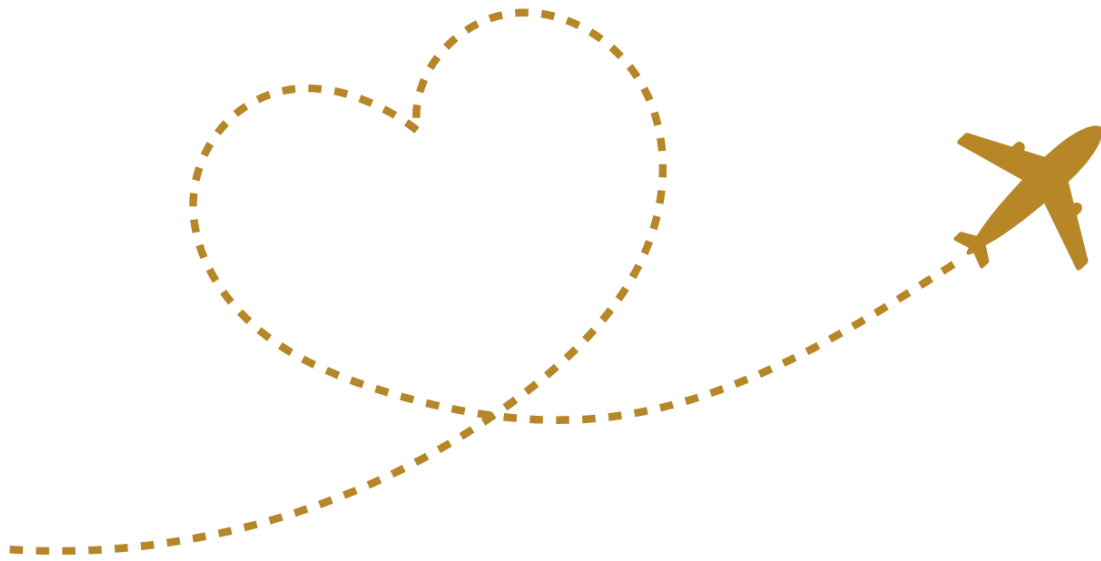
I'm not sure, but I think (that)... – nejsem si jistá, ale myslím, že...

In my opinion, ... – podle mě...

... because...



*English
Immersion
Life Stories*



Kateryna Novella's Trips & Adventures

*3 short stories & audio
for beginners*

~3~

Story 7 - Dreams

That summer, I was eighteen.

I passed my **school-leaving exam** and finished **secondary school**.

My parents were proud, and my teachers shook my hand and smiled.

I felt adult and strong.

I thought that real life was finally starting.

I lived in a small town in the west of the Czech Republic, near the German border.

My best friend was a boy from my class.

His name was Karel.

We **grew up** in the same town and went to the same school for many years.

He was calm, funny and kind, and I **trusted** him.

After school we often walked by the river or sat on an old bench near the station and talked about the future.

At that time jobs were not easy to find.

Some old factories in our region were closing.

New companies and shops were small and needed only a few people.

Karel tried different **short-term** jobs, but the money was low.

He felt tired and a little **angry**, because he wanted to live like an adult man and take care of a family one day.



to grow up - vyrůst

to trust - důvěřovat

short-term - krátkodobý

angry - naštvaný

I was a bit luckier.

I found a job in a small office in the centre of our town.

Every morning, I walked there in my skirt and light **jacket**.

In the office I answered the phone, carried papers from one room to another and **typed** letters on a big noisy **typewriter**.

The work was easy for me.

I knew it was under my level of education, but the regular **salary** gave me a feeling of safety.

At that time every young man had to do one year of **military service**.

My older cousins liked to talk about their time in uniform and in the **barracks**.

Karel had some health problems, so the **army** doctor gave him a **medical exemption** from military service - the document was called "the blue book".

So, he didn't have to join the army and needed to find a job.

Many young men from our town went to work in Germany.

They had jobs on **building sites** or in factories.

They came home with dirty hands and tired faces, but they earned good money.

Karel listened to their stories and started to think about Germany too.



jacket – sako

to type – psát na klávesnici

typewriter – psací stroj

salary – výplata, plat

building site – staveniště, stavba

military service – vojenská služba (vojna)

barracks – kasárny

army – armáda, armádní

medical exemption – zdravotní výjimka

Around the same time, we began to talk about living together.

But where?

It was almost impossible to find a flat in our town.

Most flats still belonged to the state, and you could put your name on a **waiting list**.

But people waited for so many years...

Karel's grandmother lived in a small flat alone.

She was ill and needed help.

The plan was simple: we would move in with her, help her with shopping and cooking, and later Karel could get the flat officially in his name.

It sounded practical and **serious**.

We felt very adult when we spoke about **rent**, electricity bills and all those things.

The flat was small, but for us it was a big step.

There was one bedroom, a small living room, a little kitchen and a bathroom.

On the tiny balcony there were three **washing lines**.

Karel's granny lived in the bedroom, and we lived in the living room.

There was a brown **sofa bed**, a heavy wardrobe and a small TV with two channels.

From the window we could see tall grey **blocks of flats** and a few trees.

When we ate our first lunch in the flat, we were so happy.

It was not beautiful, but it was a real home.



waiting list - čekací listina

serious - vážný

rent - nájem, pronájem

washing lines - šňůry na prádlo

sofa bed - rozkládací gauč

blocks of flats - paneálky

That summer we decided to get married.

At the time, it was still normal to marry young.

Many of our friends were already engaged, and some of them even had babies.

Our families were happy and started to plan the wedding.

We invited **relatives**, neighbours and old family friends.

On that day there were flowers on the tables, music from a local band and a big white cake.

I wore a simple white dress that my mother sewed for me, and I felt like a film star.

My hair was long with **highlights**.

Karel had a **beard** and looked very handsome.

People danced, laughed and sang songs that everybody knew.

The presents were very practical.

We got plates, glasses, pots and pans, **cutlery**, towels, **bed sheets** and warm blankets for winter.

Some guests gave us money in small white envelopes.

Everyone said that now we had everything we needed for a good life.

In the photos from that day, I am smiling all the time.

I really believed those words.



relatives - příbuzní

highlights - malír (v kontextu vlasů)

beard - vousy

cutlery -

bed sheets - povlečení

In the evening, we went back to our flat.

Karel's grandmother was already in bed in the small bedroom.

Karel and I sat on the old sofa in the living room and turned on the TV.

A black-and-white film was playing, but we did not really watch it.

Officially it was our wedding night, but we already knew each other very well.

We were more interested in talking about our new life.

Karel spoke about his plan to find a job in Germany, as a **bricklayer**.

We talked about seeing each other only for a few days every month.

How will we **manage**?

Will we miss each other?

Then we spoke about money, about new furniture and about children we both wanted.

The room was small, the furniture was old, and our future was not very clear.

But that night I felt calm.

I was sure that my life was just starting.

I thought, "I am a wife; I will probably soon become a mother and live a quiet life like my mum."

But in fact, it was the beginning of my **adventures**.



bricklayer - zedník

to manage - zvládnout

adventure(s) - dobrodružství

LEARNING TIPS

jesle: nursery (UK) = daycare (US)

školka: nursery school (UK) = kindergarten (US)

základní škola: primary school (UK) = elementary school (US)

střední škola: secondary school (UK) = high school (US)

učiliště: vocational school (UK/US), trade school (US)

vysoká škola, univerzita: university (UK) = university, college (US)

studentská kolej: hall of residence (UK) = dormitory, dorm (US)

gymnázium:

grammar school, academic secondary school (UK)

college-prep high school (US)

grammar school US – starší pojmenování pro základní školu

System školství je v každé zemi odlišný, proto neexistují jednoznačné ekvivalenty.

WHAT CAN YOU REMEMBER?

1. Popiš, co se dělo v roce, kdy ti bylo krásných osmnáct...

2. Jaké dárky jsi dostala?

3. Jaký dárek jsi někdy dala někomu k osmnáctinám?



Story 8 - New Hope

When I think about my early years, I often remember two different homes.
The first one was the small flat with Karel and his granny.
The second one was a shared flat in Prague, full of **strangers**, noise and new stories.
Between these two homes there was one important thing: our divorce.
Karel and I were married for a short time.
From the outside we looked okay.
We had a flat, we had jobs, we had two families that liked us.
But inside our marriage something was wrong.
Karel worked as a **bricklayer** in Germany.
He left early on Monday and came back late on Friday or even on Saturday.
He was often tired and quiet.
He wanted to rest, drink beer with his friends and sleep.
I wanted to talk, go for a walk, watch films together and plan our future.
We both **tried**, but our wishes were different.
At first I thought that it was only a difficult phase in our marriage.
I told myself, "It is only for one year. It will be better later."
But it was not better.
Karel liked his life **the way** it was.
He was happy with his friends from work and with his free evenings in the **pub**.
I needed something else.
I wanted a partner, not only a friend who came home with dirty clothes and fell asleep in front of the TV.



strangers – cizí lidé

bricklayer – zedník

to try – snažit se

the way – takový způsob

pub – hospoda

We did not **fight** a lot.

We did not scream or throw plates.

We simply lived next to each other, not together.

Sometimes we had long quiet dinners and I felt very lonely, although he was sitting in front of me.

I started to ask myself a difficult question:

“Do I want to live like this for the next thirty years?”

One evening I finally said it **aloud**.

We were sitting at the small kitchen table.

Karel was eating soup, and I was playing with my spoon.

“Karel,” I said, “I think we made a mistake. We are good friends, but we are not a good **husband and wife**.”

He put down his spoon and looked at me for a long time.

Then he nodded.

“I know,” he said quietly.

*“I also feel it.
I don't want to hurt you,
but I don't know how to be
a good husband.”*

We talked for many hours that night.

We remembered our school years and our long walks by the river.

We laughed and we cried a little.

In the end we agreed to divorce.

We did not **hate** each other.

We were just two young people who wanted different lives.



to fight – hádat se

aloud – nahlas

husband and wife – manželé

to hate – nenávidět

The divorce itself was quiet, but not easy.

We had to go to **court**.

The **judge** asked some questions about our marriage and the reasons for our divorce.

We both said that we wanted something else.

Then he read a short text and signed some papers.

A few weeks later I got a letter that said our marriage was over.

I felt light and empty at the same time.

For a few months I stayed in our flat with Karel's granny.

Karel worked in Germany and came home only sometimes.

We were friendly, but our love story was finished.

I still went to my little office every day.

I answered the phone, carried papers from one room to another and drank cheap coffee from a machine.

In the evenings I watched TV with Karel's granny or read magazines.

My life was safe, but it was also very **boring**.

One Sunday I visited my school friend Martina in Prague.

She lived in a big old house near the centre.

The house was full of young people from different towns.

They **shared** flats, rooms, fridges, stories and problems.

There were posters on the walls, bicycles in the hallway, and loud music in the evenings.

The kitchen was always busy.

Someone cooked pasta, someone made tea, someone smoked by the open window.



court – soud

judge – soudce

boring – nudný

to share – sdílet

Martina **shared** a flat with two other girls.
The flat had three small bedrooms, a living room, a kitchen and a bathroom.
The furniture was second-hand, but colourful.
There were books and plants everywhere.
On Martina's desk there was a big map of the world.
She told me about her dreams: to travel, to study, to work with languages.
That evening we sat on the floor, drank cheap wine and ate bread with cheese.
Martina listened to my story about Karel and the divorce.
“You are free now,” she said. “You are only twenty. Why don’t you move here?
Prague is not perfect, but it is bigger than your town. You can find a different job,
meet new people and see what you really want.”
Her words stayed in my head for many days.
I looked around our flat in the grey **block of flats**.
The sofa bed, the two-channel TV, the washing lines on the balcony.
Everything felt suddenly so ugly.
A few weeks later I made my decision.
I talked to Karel’s granny.
She was kind and **wise**.
“Katka,” she said, “you are young. You helped me a lot, but I can **manage** with
Karel’s help and with the neighbours. You must live your own life.”
So, I started to look for a room in Prague.
People put small **adverts** in newspapers or on the **notice boards** at universities.
I read them carefully on the bus to work and in my **lunch breaks**.



wise – moudrá

advert – inzerát

notice board – nástěnka (informační)

lunch break – pauza / přestávka na oběd

Finally, I found something.

It was a room in a shared flat in Prague 4, not far from the metro station.

Three young people lived there: a nurse, a student and a young man who worked in a music shop.

The room was small, with one window, a bed, a desk and a wardrobe.

The **rent** was high for me, but not impossible, so I said yes.

The day I moved to Prague, my parents drove me there in my father's old car.

We put my suitcase, a box of books, a lamp and one green plant into the **boot**.

My mother cried quietly on the way.

My father was **serious**, but he tried to smile.

"You can always come back," he said when we carried the last box up the stairs.

The shared flat was noisy and busy.

The kitchen was small, but there were three different kinds of tea, many **spices** and colourful cups.

On the fridge there was a list of **cleaning duties** and a calendar.

My new **flatmates** were friendly, but I was shy.

I did not know their **habits** yet.

I was afraid to stay too long in the shower or to make noise early in the morning.

The first night in my new room was strange.

I lay on my bed and listened to the city sounds: cars, trams, voices in the street.

The window was open a little, and I could smell **petrol** and cigarettes.

I missed the quiet of our small town.

I missed the old sofa bed and the smell of soup from Karel's granny's kitchen.

At the same time, I felt **excited** because a new life was starting.



boot – kufr auta

spices – koření

cleaning duties – úklidová služba

flatmate – spolubydlicí

habits – zvyk(y)

petrol – benzín

After a few weeks I found a new job, in a small travel agency.
I sat at a desk near the window and answered phone calls from people who wanted to go on holiday.
I gave them information about buses, hotels and prices.
Sometimes I typed simple letters or filled in forms.
It was still not my dream job, but it was a little more interesting than before.
I liked to hear foreign city names during the day: Paris, Rome, Madrid.
In the evenings I didn't want to go home **immediately**.
Sometimes I walked slowly through the city centre.
I looked at the shop windows, the trams, the **crowds** of people.
I bought hot dogs from small kiosks or sat on a bench and watched tourists with maps.
Prague felt big and full of **possibilities**, and I felt very small in it.
On **some nights** we cooked together and ate at the small table in the kitchen.
We shared food and stories from work.
On **Friday nights** we often went to a pub or to a cheap cinema.
We laughed a lot and came home late, our clothes smelling of smoke.
On **other nights** the flat was almost empty.
The nurse worked night shifts, the student studied in the library, and the young man from the music shop went to concerts.
On those evenings I sat alone in my room.
I listened to the neighbours' TV through the wall and read books or wrote long letters to my friends.



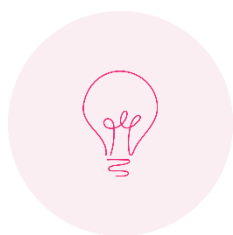
immediately – hneď

crowd – dav

possibilities – možnosti

nights – v tomto kontextu "večery", nejen "noci"

My parents called me once a week on the **landline phone** in the corridor.
Sometimes my mother asked, "Have you met a nice man yet?"
My aunt wrote me a postcard that said, "You are still young, but don't wait too long with children."
Everybody seemed to think about my future more than I did.
Inside, I was not ready for a new husband or children.
I wanted to learn how to live alone first - without Karel, without my parents, without the old flat and the old roles.
Sometimes I felt strong and free.
Sometimes I felt tired and **confused**.
One rainy evening I sat in a small café near the river with Martina.
We drank coffee and watched people run with umbrellas.
"So," she asked, "are you happy in Prague?"
I thought for a moment.
"I am learning to be alone, to pay my own bills, to find my place here. It is not easy, but I don't want to go back."
Martina smiled. "There is not only **a way back**. There is also **a way forward**. The world is big. You can go and live abroad."
I laughed and shook my head.
The idea sounded impossible.
Another country, another language, another life?
It was too big for me at that moment.
But later I started thinking about it.
Maybe Prague was not the end.
Maybe it was only another beginning.



landline phone – pevná linka

confused – zmatený, zmatená

a way back – cesta zpět

a way forward – cesta vpřed

LEARNING TIPS

byt: flat (UK) = apartment (US)

bytový dům: block of flats (UK) = apartment building (US)

sídlíště: housing estate (neexistuje přesné pojmenování, je potřeba vyjádřit opisem)

spolubydlící: flatmate (UK) = roommate (US)

spolužák: schoolmate, classmate

hospoda: pub (UK) = bar (US)

tramvaj: tram (UK) = streetcar (US)

benzín: petrol (UK) = gas, gasoline (US)

WHAT CAN YOU REMEMBER?

1. Jaká byla tvoje první práce?

2. Jaký byl tvůj první byt?

3. Jaká byla tvoje první láska?



Story 9 - The Beginning

When I look back now, I can see one clear moment when my life changed.
It was when my colleague at work put a blue brochure on my desk.
On the cover there was a picture of a smiling girl with two small children.
Above them there were three words in big letters: AUPAIR IN ENGLAND.
She said, "Look, Katka, my sister **has just come** back from England. She was an aupair there for one year. She says it was hard, but it was the best year of her life."
I took the brochure home; I read it in the tram, then in my room, then again.
It said: *You live with an English family, you help with the children, you get pocket money and food, and you go to language school two or three times a week.*
I was thinking about my life.

I have already lived in Prague for some time.

I have my small room, my job in a travel agency and a few good friends.

I know the streets in the centre; I know some cafés and parks.

Prague is not new for me anymore.

And I have always liked English.

At school it was my favourite subject.

I have watched some films with English subtitles; **I have read** a few simple books in English and sometimes I spoke English at work.

But **I have never really used** the language in real life.

I thought:

"I am young.
I don't have a husband,
I don't have children,
I don't have my own flat.
If I don't go now,
then when?"



pocket money – kapesné

předpřítomný čas – have/has + 3. tvar slovesa

The next week I went to the agency.

It was in a small office on the third floor of an old building.

There were posters of London buses and red telephone boxes on the walls.

A woman in a dark **jacket** sat behind a desk.

“Do you have **experience** with children?” she asked.

“Yes,” I said. “I have younger cousins. I have often looked after them. I also helped in a **children’s club** in our town.”

“Do you smoke?”

“No.”

“Are you married?”

“No,” I said and smiled a little. “I am divorced.”

She did not ask more about it.

“You must **fill this in** in English,” she said and gave me some papers.

“Write about your family, your hobbies and your experience with children. We also need your photo. It is easier for English people to remember faces than Czech names. Also, the family in England will be able to find you at the airport or the bus station when you arrive.”

For the next few evenings I sat at my desk and wrote about myself in simple English.

I wrote slowly, but my heart was fast.

When I finished, I took the papers and photos back to the agency.

And then I waited.

Waiting was the hardest part.

Every day I went to work, answered phone calls and talked to people who wanted to travel to Egypt, Cuba, Australia...

I thought: "It's so easy to go abroad. **I have only been** to Germany once, when I visited Karel. And **I have never flown** on a plane."



experience – zkušenost(i)

children’s club – dětský klub / kroužek

to fill in – vyplnit

One afternoon, when I came home from work, I finally found an envelope with the agency logo in our **letterbox**.

My hands were shaking a little when I opened it.

Inside there was a letter from an English family.

It started with “Dear Katka” and it was full of simple sentences.

There were also two small pictures which the children **drew** for me.

When I finished reading, I was smiling.

In the evening, I told Martina about it.

“So, are you going?” she asked.

“I think so,” I said. “I am **scared**, but I am more **excited** than scared.”

My parents were surprised when I told them.

My mother was **worried**.

“**You have never lived** in another country. What if something goes wrong?”

My father tried to be practical.

“Maybe this is your chance. If you have problems, you can always come back home.”

We talked for a long time.

In the end they agreed, and I signed the contract with the agency.

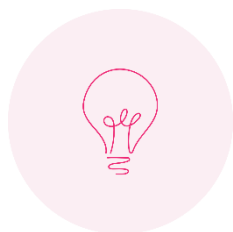
The next weeks were full of preparations.

I bought a small suitcase and a warm coat.

I went to the dentist, because I did not know how expensive dentists were in England.

I also tried to speak English every day, at least a little.

I have never been so motivated to study before.



letterbox – poštovní schránka

to draw – kreslit, nakreslit / **drew** – minulý čas

scared – vyděšený, vystrašený

excited – nadšený, vzrušený (pozitivně)

worried – ustaraný, znepokojený

I left Prague on a grey morning in March.
My parents and Martina came to the airport with me.
There were tears, hugs and last jokes.
I **checked in** my suitcase and then I stood in the line for **passport control**.
“Call us when you arrive,” my mother said.
“I will,” I answered.
The **flight** was short but important.
For the first time in my life, I was in a plane.
For the first time people around me spoke English and I understood only part of their conversations.
I looked out of the small window and watched the clouds.
It felt like my old life was slowly **disappearing** under them.
At the airport in London, I followed the other passengers through long corridors.
My new **host mother**, Susan, was waiting for me with a paper in her hand.
On the paper there was my name: KATKA.
She smiled and hugged me.
“Welcome to England,” she said.
Her voice was friendly, but my head was full of noise.
I suddenly felt very tired.
On the way to their town, we sat in a car and tried to talk.
I understood maybe half of her words.
When I did not know what to say, I smiled and said, “Yes” or “I see.”



check-in – odbavení na letišti

flight – let

passport control – pasová kontrola

disappearing – mizející / **to disappear** – (z)mizet

host mother – matka dětí hostitelské rodiny

The town was smaller than London, but still big for me.
There were houses with small front gardens, a few shops, a church and a park.
Their house was on a quiet street near a school.
Inside the house I met the children, Tom and Lucy.
They were shy at first, but very **curious**.
They showed me their toys and their rooms.
Tom asked if I liked football, Lucy asked if I could **draw** a princess.
My room was small but nice.
There was a bed, a wardrobe, a desk and a shelf with a few books.
There was also a small window with a view of the neighbour's garden.
I put my suitcase on the floor and opened it.
I suddenly felt very far from home.
The first weeks were not easy.
I had to learn the family's rules, the children's **habits** and the new everyday words.
Morning routine, **school run**, homework, bath time, bedtime stories.
In the evenings I was tired.
My head hurt from all the new words and sounds.
But slowly, something started to change.

*I noticed that
I understood more of the
conversations. And I could
answer simple questions
without thinking
too much.*



curious – zvědavý

school run – doprovázení dětí do školy / cesta do školy

Twice a week I went to an evening language school in the town centre.
 There were other aupairs from different countries.
 We sat in the classroom, did exercises, and laughed at our mistakes.
 Our teacher, Mrs. Green, was **patient** and kind.
 One day, after the lesson, Mrs. Green said, "Next week we will have a small conversation group in the library. A man from the library will come and speak with you. He is not a teacher, but he likes to help foreigners with English."
 That was how I first met David.
 The library was in a red **brick** building near the park.
 Inside it was quiet and warm.
 There were long shelves of books, tables with lamps and a corner with children's books.
I have always loved libraries, so **I felt at home** there immediately.
 We sat at a **round** table in a small reading room.
 There were six of us students and one man.
 He was taller than the other people in the room, with some grey hair and kind eyes.
 He wore a simple shirt and a dark **jumper**.
 He smiled a lot and had **wrinkles** around his eyes.
 "Hello, I'm David," he said. "I work here in the library. **I have worked** here for many years. I like books and I like meeting people from other countries. I'm not a teacher, but I hope we can have a nice talk together."
 His voice was calm and clear.
 We introduced ourselves **one by one**.
 When it was **my turn**, I said, "My name is Katka. I am from the Czech Republic. I am an aupair. **I have been in England** for three months now."



patient – trpělivý

brick – cihla, cihlový

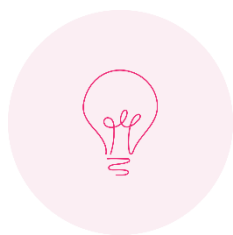
round – kulatý

jumper – svetr, mikina

wrinkles – vrásky

my/your turn – jsem/jsi na řadě; pořadí

The group went on for an hour.
We talked about food, weather, our countries and our plans.
David listened carefully and helped us when we were looking for a word.
He did not **correct** every small error.
He only repeated our sentences in a better way, and we tried to copy him.
When the group finished, I stayed a little longer.
I wanted to borrow a simple English book.
“Can I help you find something?” he asked when he saw me in the fiction section.
“Yes, please,” I said. “**I have read** a few "easy readers", but I would like something a little more difficult now.”
He looked at me for a second and then walked to one of the shelves.
“Maybe this one,” he said and gave me a **thin** book.
“It is not too long, but the story is interesting. Some people **have told** me that they started to enjoy reading in English with this book.”
I took it in my hands.
The cover was blue, and the title was simple.
“Thank you,” I said. “I will try.”
When I left the library that evening, the sky was dark, and the **streetlamps** were on.
I did not know it then, but meeting David was **truly** the beginning of my new life.



to correct – opravit (chybu)

thin – tenký

streetlamps – pouliční lampy

truly – opravdu, skutečně

LEARNING TIPS

Předpřítomný čas se často používá se slovíčky:

already, always, ever, just, never, not yet, since

Co máš odjakživa ráda? **What have you always liked?**

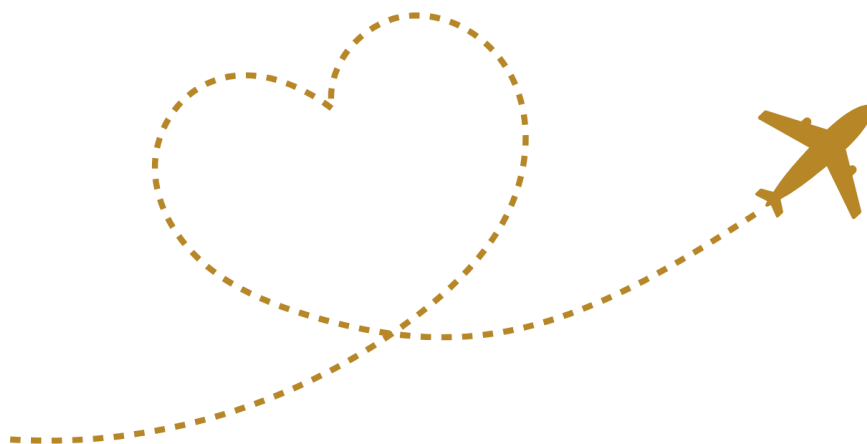
Jaké exotické jídlo už jsi ochutnala? **What exotic food have you already tasted?**

Co jsi nikdy v životě nezažila? **What have you never experienced in your life?**

Jakou knihu jsi zatím nečetla? **Which book haven't you read yet?**

Jaká slovíčka ses naučila od chvíle, kdy jsi začala číst tuto knížku?

Which new words have you learned since you started reading this book?





I hope you enjoyed reading my stories about Kateryna Novella!

Don't forget to join my free Facebook group [READING OASIS >>](#)

Nezapomeň se přidat do mé bezplatné Facebook skupiny,
kde poskytuju podporu všem svým studentkám.

Katka Havlová

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