



A NOD TO THE WISE

Comfortable reading for Advanced Readers
Reading with support of vocabulary list & Czech mirror version

Story and learning tips by Katka Havlová
Illustrated by Monika Barošová



Tento vzdělávací materiál je dostupný výhradně na
www.jazykovamentorka.cz, www.languagementor.eu
a přímo ode mě jako součást kurzu.

Pokud jsi tuto knihu získal/a jiným způsobem, budu ráda, když mi dáš vědět. Můžeš získat
přístup k videím, audiu, konzultacím a dalším bonusům.

Text i ilustrace jsou chráněny autorským právem a nesmí být šířeny bez souhlasu autorky.

© 2026 Katka Havlová

Katka Havlová

CHAPTERS

1. UNBELIEVABLE PETER.....	1
2. GINGER SIDNEY.....	6
3. BITTER BETRAYAL	11
4. MY FIRST JOHNNY.....	15
5. SELFISH MICHAEL	21
6. MY OLDER SISTER.....	26
7. MY NEW LIFE	30
8. TONY OF THE PAST	36
9. MY NEW NEIGHBOUR.....	40

AMENDMENTS

INSTRUCTIONS.....	1
LEVEL B2	2
LEVEL C1 & C2	9
WHO IS WHO CHEAT-SHEET.....	13



1. Unbelievable Peter

1.1

I almost did it; quite deliberately, **on purpose**. I wanted to put my head on his shoulder and wait to see how long he would bear it. What he would say. What he would do. But the jerk of the train has postponed the moment of truth indefinitely and judging by the intervals at which the fits of courage overwhelm me, perhaps for eternity. My head tilted just a little towards him, and at that moment, the bouncing of the train threw me in the opposite direction. And the opportunity was gone. Just how many more of these opportunities will I have? How much longer can I afford to **stand by? Hold back?** Wait?

The furthest I've **gotten** so far was falling on him on the escalator. It was winter, freezing temperatures, so unfortunately no spark got through the thick clothes. But it was a good time to let him know I was a great girl. Smart and kind. Ready to share her warmth. In the spring, I'll stun him with my sexy body, but there's time for that. I don't want **one-night stands**. I want this handsome guy to come back to me.

So far, just my hands in thick gloves and a scarf up to my chin. Even though I had already tried to put my palm on his cheek for a second during our conversation about cold hands; **it did no good**, because it was only a moment, and besides, my hand was icy, and his face was frozen. Today I wanted to approach him with a clear signal.

stand by – postávat okolo pasivně

hold back – držet se zpátky

it did no good – nebylo to k ničemu

on purpose – schválně

one-night stands – na jednu noc

🌱 gotten 🌟 got

C1 + C2

indefinitely

jerk

overwhelm

palm

tilted

spark



1.2

With an invitation: don't resist! How many more opportunities like this will there be? How many more guys like him will I meet? I'll be forty this year.

I must add a **thumbs-down** in my diary again today for another wasted day without a man. Ever since I met Peter, I've **turned down** all the invitations for dates, which don't come **few and far between**, but there's no point. I've tried twice and kept thinking of Peter. I'll do it tomorrow. I'll tell him what I want from him. I've always said what I want, why am I so reluctant now? Because I'm afraid of what he'll say? Do I care about him or am I just not as confident as I was a few years ago?

I've never wanted a man all to myself. I just need a half of him. That's exactly what I learned from men – they don't want to give everything. And I don't want them to.

Sometimes I think Peter will fall in love with me, not a crazy kind of love, just an easy, nice and quiet love without anxiety, without commitment. But sometimes I think it won't come. That he won't feel it. I'll just be a woman on a train and that's all. And in that case, it would be better not to hold back anymore and just break it off; and in the worst case, just find another object.

It wouldn't be hard; dark-haired married men **in their thirties**, not too short, not too tall, who I can kiss while standing on my tiptoes, there's a carload of them every morning. Why don't I just put my head on one of their shoulders? No – I don't know why, but only *he* inspires me to cling to him and bite a bit. Only Peter. My friend's husband.

I can't sleep. Two in the morning. It's in my head. Should I or shouldn't I **make the move**? Why don't I let myself get picked up by one of the those who are trying to do so, why am I instead clinging, quite senselessly, to the one-and-only who is so dangerously close? Haven't I grown up yet?

few and far between = not many not often
in their thirties = between 30 and 39 years old
to make the move = to do it
thumb-down = negative sign 👎
turned down = refuse; say no

C1 + C2
carload
cling
reluctant
tiptoes



1.3

Peter has a family of his own and he certainly sends no signals of displeasure. No suggestive looks, no ambiguous remarks. He obviously doesn't want another woman in his life, so why did I decide to force myself on him and destroy his peaceful world?

Why don't I live in my own world and get picked up on a train, by one of those reasonably tall handsome men – someone who has already **made up his mind** and accepted the idea of finding a quiet and sincere lover?

For three long months now, my only companion has been my upcoming fortieth birthday, and it's really hard to share a bed with it. And I think I'm **losing my mind**. I can't go on like this. I'll tell Peter first thing tomorrow morning that... what? I'll find someone else tomorrow. On the train, on the street, at lunch. But urgently. Otherwise, I'll have to admit I'm in love with Peter.

Six in the morning. I didn't sleep at all. It's a truth I've fought **tooth and nail** against. I fell in love with him for real. That's the only right answer to all my questions so far. That's why I'm so attached to him and reject everyone else. That's why I'm so cautious. If he were to reject me, it would be the end of our mornings together. And I'd rather spend that half hour in the false hope day after day with him; than alone, rejected, and disappointed, with the fortieth birthday on my back. **What is the point** of my body trained by occasional jogging or my flat belly without pregnancy scars? What's the point of my gorgeous firm breasts not destroyed by breastfeeding? **There's no point!**

Because the guy, the man whose aura will not let me rest, prefers the woman he has at home. He doesn't mind at all that she's been a milkmaid twice, that she's been exhausted by the daily mundane care for two naughty little ones. She's his wife. Whereas I'm nobody's wife.

losing my mind = becoming crazy

made up his mind = decided

tooth and nail

What is the point? – Jaký to má smysl?

There's no point! – Nemá to žádný smysl!

C1 + C2

breastfeeding

milkmaid

mundane

occasional

pregnancy

sincere

upcoming

belly



1.4

I need to find someone else. In my category. I don't want to get married nor find a man for love, family, joy, and sorrow. But I don't want to go looking for random guys to have sex with anymore. I want a steady, handsome man who stops by once a week to hug me. It can't be Peter.

I'll go back to the good old and fair mode with Mark. I'll be back on the train with Peter in an hour, but now only to **stumble over him** with a look of disinterest. If I'm in love with him, I can't fight it. It wouldn't be fair. To him. To me.

He put his hand down on my knee. See how simple it is – stop fixating on the specific sharply cut unshaven chin, open your eyes, and open your mind, just open up. It was just a moment, when asking whether my pants were made of real leather. But suddenly there was the spark. Electrifying. Not burning yet, but the signal was sent. There was what should have been there long ago. It was really there.

I can't believe it. Just when I decided to give him up after a sleepless night. I don't want to start dating a married guy I'm probably really in love with. That would be suicide.

I just wanted to have fun with him. Look into those brown eyes of his over the hump of my Venus belly and moan... That's what I wanted. And then take a shower and know that when I come out of the bathroom, he'll be gone until the next time. A reliable routine for a nice, non-committal relationship based on sex. That's what I wanted. That's what I want. But without the emotions. He put his hand down on my knee for a moment to get the answer whether my pants were leather. He shouldn't have done that. The signal was sent but it wasn't received. I glanced out the window and suddenly remembered Richard, his hands, his fingers. The eyes. And his age. Could I still dig his number out of the old phone records?

stumble over him – zakopnout/zavadit o něj

C1 + C2

hump

moan

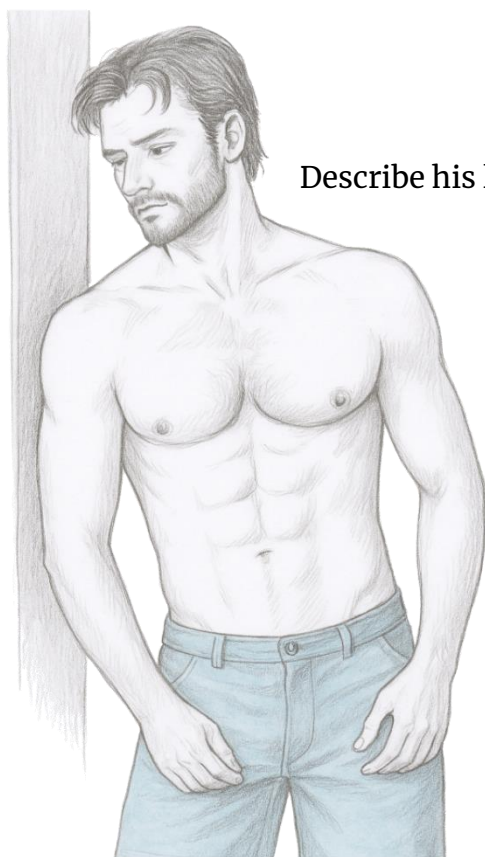
mode

random

sorrow

stumble

sleepless



Relax, or do this EXERCISE (1)

This is Peter. Would you like to describe him?

Describe his looks as well as his personality based on Chapter 1.



LEARNING TIP



Did you manage the first chapter all right? If you struggled with it, do this:

First read the whole paragraph and highlight the words which you don't understand and which at the same time prevent you from understanding the meaning of the paragraph.

Don't worry too much about words which you don't understand if you still can grasp the meaning.

The words from **C1 and C2** levels:

- You can learn the words if you are aiming at achieving the specific level (e.g., examination)
- Or try to guess them if you are reading for pleasure

The "unknown" words will repeat so **the further** you read, **the fewer** of them.

🍀 GOOD LUCK! 🍀



2. Ginger Sidney

2.1

I gasped. Gingers were never my type. I couldn't follow the flow of his speech at all. All I knew was that he was confident, had a firm voice, a direct look, red hair, and incredibly blue eyes that **gave me chills** when I imagined those blue irises peeking out from behind my Venus... **For goodness' sake!** I'm at work, I can't think about sex right now! I gasped.

I still can't believe it was exactly the same in my imagination as it was in reality. It was a totally crazy week. I'm calling it "goodbye to 30's" because I'm not going to experience anything like that again in my life after forty, and I don't really want to. His girlfriend was doing an internship abroad, and she still had a week to go. Six nights that Sidney spent in my bed without a minute's delay. With him, I forgot all about my worries.

He was in his early thirties, had bought the car of his dreams and was looking for destinations near and far to drive to when I suggested that he could **combine pleasant with useful** and give me a lift home. *'And my driving you home will be useful or pleasant?'* he asked bluntly. And **off we went**.

He wasn't much of a kisser, which surprised me; his eyes should be matched by hot lips and a tongue that would fill my mouth softly. But his kiss was awfully sharp and dry, his tongue stiff, and even though he pushed it almost all the way down my throat, I felt like he hadn't touched me inside at all. But everything else was amazing. Although I can't speak of technique, I don't know why, there was something primal about it, I mean really animalistic; it represented why a man and a woman long for each other, why they want and need to do it again and again. I don't think he had many women, but I didn't want to teach him anything, I wanted to return him to his sweetheart in a sort of pure state. I enjoyed it. It was a perfectly flawless farewell to 30!

For goodness' sake! – něco jako "propánajána"

Gives me chills – mrazí mě

Off we go! – zvolání "Hurá na cestu!"

animalistic (animal)

farewell (goodbye)

gingers (red hair)

kisser (kiss)

sweetheart

internship - praxe

C1 + C2

bluntly

flawless

gasped

irises

long for

peeking

primal



2.2

With a few exceptions, the **scenario** of our morning **ritual** has changed slightly since some time ago. It is Peter, who actively starts every conversation now. We talk casually, in a friendly way, as before. I don't blame him anymore. I'm holding back. The last weeks' time out, when Sidney drove me to work, did me good.

I realised, terribly reluctantly that I'd ask more of Peter than I was allowed to ask at all. That having the kind of time with him as I'd had with Mark until recently or the limited time frame with Sidney, would never be enough for me.

With every other guy, the time-limited relationship was a distinct advantage. But I'd like to have Peter completely. I guess. Maybe not, who knows. He'd probably be able to get on my nerves about something too. But I'm incredibly **goofy**, hitting forty, in love with a handsome guy, my friend's husband, a father of two, and I've never really wanted to go that far. I decided to swallow it and let it go.

I'm **gonna** try and find Richard's phone number today. We've never dated, we've both been playing the pick-up game for too long. If I call him now and he comes, I'll win the old fight. I'm exaggerating, though. It was never a fight between us. We both wanted it. None of us just wanted to **give in**. On the other hand, I was just thinking that giving in would be kind of nice. I've been running my life too seriously for too long.

Yes, I'm emotionally torn apart by circumstances, but on the outside I'm a practical, sensible woman, single by choice. However, if I call Richard, I'll be right back where I am, perhaps richer for a new sexual experience, but it will put my fortieth birthday not a single day off, and it won't bring me any closer to a peaceful, non-committal relationship.

give in = give up
goofy = silly, crazy
ritual
scenario
👉 gonna 👑 going to

C1 + C2
distinct
exaggerating
hold back
reluctantly
torn apart



2.3

I feel that the comfortable relationship which I crave so much I can have with the **one-and-only**, and I've had to forbid myself that. But the worst part is that maybe I could only feel that comfort from someone I love. That would be a **vicious circle**, because I don't want a relationship with a crush, it's too late for that. I just want peace. And I want Peter. I really do!

Peter hasn't taken our train in the morning for the fourth day in a row. I hope that the saying "**out of sight, out of mind**" will prove true. I don't really know him at all. Of course, I know that he is not just a sweetheart to be loved, that dealing with everyday duties is **probably no picnic**, I can see a hint of hysteria in the corner of his mouth, stubbornness. I can imagine how he shouts at the children at home when he needs a moment of peace. But this is just my imagination, I don't really know anything about that. All I know is that I like him, and that I was feverish when I first saw him. That should have warned me, should have made me understand that it's not just physical arousal. I underestimated it. He hasn't been on our train since Monday.

I found Richard's number. It's unavailable. Mark got divorced, which took him out of my **repertoire**. I just want a guy with a place to come back to. And where he likes to come back to. I'm almost 40, and I'm not looking for love for the rest of my life. I'm just looking for a man! I should have a lot to choose from as I have what guys want and I don't hide it. I tolerate quirks and **imperfections**. But men have gone. They've disappeared. There's only one left; witty, intelligent, handsome, in relationship, happily married, just the ideal man. For me. And I **ruled him out**. Am I stupid?

imperfections

repertoire

it is no picnic – není to žádná sranda, žádný med

one-and-only - jediný

out of sight, out of mind – sejde z očí, sejde z mysli

ruled him out – vyloučit ho

vicious circle – bludný kruh

C1 + C2

arousal

crave

crush

feverish

quirks

stubbornness



2.4

Day five. He's definitely not off my mind. I miss him. But it's not just Peter who's not going today. Neither am I. There're no trains.

This was one of the opportunities I've been waiting for – spending more time with him when he can't get away, waiting for a train that isn't coming, and enjoying his company. Instead, I'm standing here alone, sulking that I'm going to miss a meeting I care about, that my ankles hurt in these heels which haven't been made for tap dancing on the platform for hours. Enough. I give up. I'll try to wave at a passing car and either hitchhike to work or go home. I'm gonna snuggle into my quilts like a little girl and try to sleep. I'm having withdrawal and I've got to get over it. I must get Peter off my mind **once and for all**. I just must stop thinking about him and start acting like an adult again. I must start *feeling* like an adult again.

The last attempt to get to work, I wave at an old green Volvo **station wagon**. It's passing me, but wait, it's slowing down... It's stopped. I run to the passenger's door, register the empty child seat in the back seat. Within ten minutes of driving, I know everything about him. He doesn't have a ring. He says: "*I live*" and not "*we live*". A casual smart outfit, a kind smile, and beautiful straight teeth. Big hands. Yeah, this guy knows what he wants. I also say: "*I live*" and "*I often go in this direction*". He says he works most evenings; the signal's been sent. I don't ask what his name is. I know the **license plate**, which I instinctively memorize every time I get into a stranger's car. I politely decline the offer of a morning coffee together, perhaps next time. The signal has been received.

license plate

once and for all – jednou pro vždy

station wagon – kombík

snuggle = move into a warm, comfortable position

C1 + C2

quilts

sulking

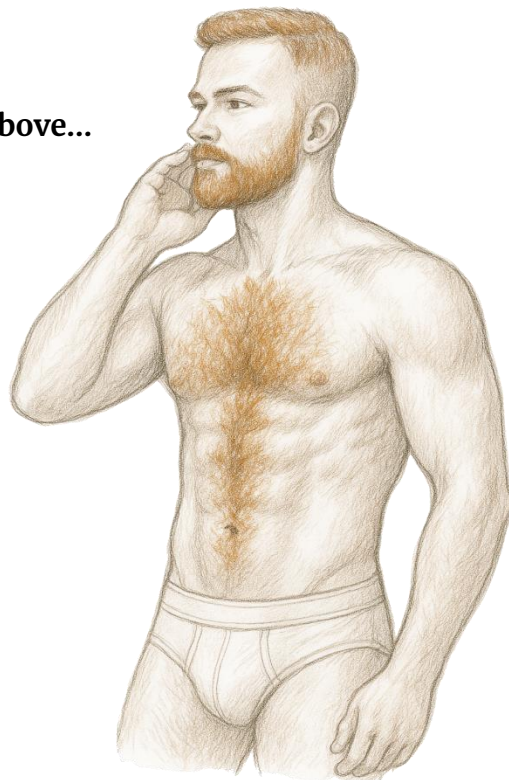
withdrawal



EXERCISE (2)

This is Sidney. Would you like to describe him?

His looks as well as his behaviour based on the text above...



LEARNING TIP



Proper names = names of people usually don't translate or rewrite.

However, in this short story I have decided to show you the English equivalents of some Czech names.

No surprise 😊

Jane – Jana

Mark – Marek

Michael – Michal

Peter – Petr

Johnny – Honza

Lucille – Lucinka

Tony – Tonda

Martin – Martin

Richard – Richard

Shocking, right? 🤯

Sidney – Zdeněk

*But this one is a surprise,
isn't it? 🤔*



3. Bitter Betrayal

3.1

The approaching milestone marking forty years of my life has been timidly hiding in a corner for more than a week. I feel beautiful, irresistible, though I remain unapproachable. Peter still doesn't take our train. I'm relieved. Maybe he takes an earlier train. Or a later one. He doesn't want to meet me; **so much the better**. I met a man with the Volvo in Tesco's yesterday. He had a basket almost full of **rice puddings**, probably expecting his kids for the weekend. I didn't ask. He was already in the checkout queue when I came in. We just nodded and smiled at each other. At least I had a chance to check how tall he was, having only seen him sitting before. I think that standing on my tiptoes it would be only just, as he's a little taller than I like, but I forgive him because of his beautiful teeth. Because of his smile that allows me to see those teeth.

Even though I often thought of him and imagined where and how we might meet by chance, I was caught off guard. I was stunned, unable to do any normal shopping at all and just strolled through the aisles, staring at the goods on the shelves and pushing the empty **cart** here and there aimlessly. When I saw my strange behaviour, I wheeled the cart to the exit and got out without buying anything. I'm going to take a walk. Breathe it out. Life is amazing. I can still live these moments to the fullest like I did in my 20s. I don't have to contain the excitement, I can get thrilled about every new man and let myself get carried away as long as I like. Until I meet a new man again. I'm still myself, and that's priceless. Both my sisters are model mothers, **authors of their own happiness**. They'd both have to finish their shopping and run home to their families. I can leave the whole shopping thing behind, put it off for an hour or three days, and go for a walk. And think about what kind of **cookies** Mr. Volvo would like with his morning coffee in bed.

C1 + C2

aimlessly

aisles

irresistible

milestone

strolled

stunned

timidly

authors of their own happiness – svého štěstí strůjcem

so much the better – (čím dál) tím líp

wheeled – posunovat něčím na kolečkách

🚩 rice puddings – sweet cream popular with children

🍪 cookies 🍪 biscuits – sušenky

🛒 cart 🛒 trolley – vozík



3.2

One of my sisters recently told me I was ridiculous. That I hadn't grown up yet. That I don't want to take responsibility. Well, yes, she's right. So what? It's better not to have kids if I don't want them and not to marry a man who can't satisfy me consistently when instead, I can have my freedom and get the best out of every man. Is that ridiculous? So be it. I'm content, at peace with myself, at peace with the pitfalls of my lifestyle. Which my sister, constantly arguing with her husband about who had more time off in the past week, is definitely not. She can go fuck herself! And I'm going for a walk.

A blow to the head. Peter. I can't even think about it. I dialled Richard's number again. With no desire to talk to him, just an attempt to let off steam. There's still no answer.

It was quite a successful day; I did a great deal of work and secured my daily bread for some time ahead. Still, I'm nervous, irritated. I feel cheated. Peter. Like a blow to the head. I met him at the **municipal office** when I went to get my new passport. He came to renew his **driver's license**. He just said we hadn't seen each other for a while, that he didn't take the train anymore because he lives somewhere else. But I see Jana almost every day in their garden. Once a month she pays a babysitter, and we go out together. She didn't tell me that Peter moved out! Of course, I never asked her about him, and the last time we met was three weeks ago. But surely his moving out didn't **come out of the blue!**? I can't believe it. Jana had problems with him and said nothing. And Peter moved out.

I just can't believe it. I feel cheated. By a friend who didn't tell me she was in trouble, by Peter who didn't tell me that... No, he didn't get out of my mind. And when I met him just now, it stung my heart. Hopelessly in love with my friend's husband, father of two.

come out of the blue – přijít z čista jasna
municipal office – městský/obecní úřad
hopelessly – without hope
driver's license
fuck *

C1 + C2
consistently
pitfalls
stung



3.3

I was approaching him slowly and gently, so as not to frighten him, so that I could borrow him from the family he would like to return to. I wanted to put my head on his shoulder, my darling; a man who had apparently been cheating on his wife with *another woman* all this time! Taking shower didn't help. I lie naked on the bed and cry. After a long time, for the first time in years, I'm crying. I feel like he cheated on *me*. He cheated on me!

I have to keep working. No matter how crushed I am. Get up and take the train to work. Without crying if possible.

At today's meeting, which Sidney attended too, I didn't think of how good it was with him. All that was left was his confident speech and his incredibly blue eyes. Otherwise, nothing. I didn't even think about his muscular **abs** trained by surfing, covered with red hair, that made me shiver with pleasure for six nights in a row, every time he took his shirt off. It wasn't until the end of the meeting, when everyone started shaking hands, that I noticed the ginger hair coming out of his cuffs. Instantly in my brain, I played a **trailer** of the moments when those muscular hairy arms held me firmly at the waist and reliably transferred his rhythm into my body. Then he gently pressed my hand saying *thank you* and I had to work hard to realize that he was thanking me for the work I was doing for their company and not for the **chaotic** memories of an incredible six-day storm of **testosterone and estrogen**. He didn't look me in the eye, though. Just a fleeting glance, a smile out of the corner of his mouth. He was no Don Juan. Maybe he only did it once. The first and maybe the last time. With me. And he took a lot of effort to cope with it. He's a nice, honest guy. Unlike Peter, that traitor.

abs = abdominal muscles

chaotic (chaos)

oestrogen

testosterone

trailer

C1 + C2

crushed

cuffs

fleeting

traitor



EXERCISE (3)

Do you know ladies like the storyteller?

Do you understand them?

Do you agree with their lifestyle?



LEARNING TIP



Slova s předponou – tyto předpony dávají slovům opačný význam

UN-

unknown, unshaven, unavailable, unable, unfair, unlucky, unfortunately,
unbelievable

IM-

imperfection = not perfect, impersonal = not personal, impossible = not possible

IN-

incompetent, indefinitely

DIS-

disbelief, disappear, displeasure

IR-

irresistible, irregular



4. My First Johnny

4.1

I almost forgot how short Martin was. He's not even **five foot five**, well below my lower limit of optimal male height. He's really cute, I would sit him on my lap and stroke him, but I'm definitely not attracted to him. He knows that. I like his confidence. It's healthy, nothing over the top. No low **self-esteem**. He's a real **looker**, or rather a miniature of a looker. From a poster in which it would be impossible to compare him to the size of regular objects, I might even let him enter my imagination. But not in the real world; when he occasionally tries it on me, I must laugh. But he doesn't take my rejection to heart. He winks at me and says: "*Maybe next time*".

Today he called to say he was getting a new tenant for the ground floor studio apartment in our house that he owns. He's having some basic furnishings, carpet, a bed, a desk, sent there and asked me to take it over from the movers. Well, why not, I would do anything for Martin. He's rented me a beautiful flat at a great price, I'll happily pay him back when sex is not an option. I took advantage of a quiet morning when I didn't have to catch the train and enjoyed the luxury of a lazy, slow waking up. When I log on to my laptop at nine, I will have just enough time to **catch up** on my work for the day, and I can stay in bed until half past instead of a boring journey on a crowded city train.

Around ten o'clock, my **train of thought** was interrupted by the ringing of the phone. Unknown number, it's **gonna** be the **movers**. They're here. It's not a good time at all, I'm trying to complete my sentence quickly, hopefully I'll remember what I wanted to write next. I grabbed my keys and the keys to the downstairs studio apartment and ran out the front door.

looker = handsome

movers = staff of a moving company

self-esteem = confidence

catch up - dohnat

train of thought – myšlenkový pochod

▶ five foot five = 5'5" = 168 cm

C1 + C2

tenant

furnishings

wink



4.2

A guy with no shirt, just **overalls** and a pair of sandals, was already opening the cargo area. When he turned around, I think I was left staring at him with my mouth wide open. His eyes instantly sparkled, he took two quick paces towards me as if to hug me and then paused. '*What a coincidence*' he said, and I closed my mouth. His hair was longer than before and he had an earring in his ear, but it was him. And on a chain around his neck my **virginity pendant** glimmered in the morning sun. A tangle of snakes and lilies. I got it from my grandmother who found it tucked away in the drawer of an old **closet**, the original property of the displaced Sudeten Germans whose apartment she had once acquired including the furnishings. With a little hidden treasure.

I made the pendant a symbol of my virginity, and when Johnny and I first made love at sixteen, I gave it to him to wear as proof that I belonged to him. But after a few weeks, I realized I didn't really want to belong to anyone. And I broke up with him. And then I never saw him again. For over 20 years. I had almost forgotten that there was a Johnny, my first boyfriend. And now he was here.

I've come full circle. I'm looking for the last guy of my life, for a quiet, non-committal but safe love affair, and fate brings to me my first lover. I've really come full circle. I took over the furniture and said goodbye to him with a **handshake**. I didn't comment on the pendant, I suppose he just liked it. Nobody is so foolish as to think that a woman who has become a complete stranger still belongs to him after more than twenty years. It commemorated not only my virginity, but also his; so maybe just like me, during those long years he's forgotten who the pendant symbolized and remembered only *what* it symbolized – the introduction to the real life, the **transformation** of a boy into a man.

transformation

handshake (greeting by touching the hands)

virginity (virgin)

closet – skříň

overalls – lacláče, overal, montérky

pendant – přívěsek

I've come full circle – kruh se uzavřel

C1 + C2

cargo

commemorated

displaced

glimmered

sparkled

stable

tangle

tucked away



4.3

I signed the transfer papers, he jumped in the car, I waved at him again and he was gone. I put him out of my mind as quickly as I had twenty-three years ago. I got back to work and without much effort resumed the flow of thoughts from which I had been snapped an hour ago by the ringing of the phone. Wait! I have his phone number now! I reached for my cell phone and without hesitation deleted the entire call history. That's it. And life can go on.

In the afternoon I finished the last task and spent the rest of the day in meditation. It was a wonderful day; I was very pleased with myself. Until Peter showed up at my door that evening. **What the heck!?**

He came to get the keys to the downstairs apartment. He's going to live there to be closer to his kids! He misses them so much – for God's sake find someone else who cares! I gave him the keys and I wanted to close the door, but he stopped me. A pleading look, I wondered what the hell else he wanted from me. He said I was a friend of Jana's and that he understood I was on her side, but that he.... I rolled my eyes and slammed the door. **Asshole!** I had a **very lucky escape**. Thanks to a **divine providence** preventing me from putting my head on his shoulder a few months ago. I would have been trapped and escaped **by the skin of my teeth**. Such a **wimp**. Pathetic **bastard**. And I cried a few nights for him. I've come full circle. Thank God.

by the skin of my teeth – o vlásek, o chlup
divine providence - božská prozřetelnost
very lucky escape = being lucky to have escaped
What the heck! *
asshole *
bastard *
wimp *

C1 + C2
hesitation
pleading
resumed
snapped



4.4

I wanted to call Richard, but when I deleted my entire call history from my phone a few days ago, I didn't realize I hadn't saved his number and now it was lost for good. Anyway, it was still unavailable, no big loss. Peter lives right below me now. I try to avoid him as much as possible. He's a total wreck. **If we happen to meet** on a train, we don't talk. Luckily, I'm on a different schedule now, because the job I'm working on rarely requires me to go in the morning, I usually work afternoons and evenings now.

I never heard from Jana again. I don't call her; the agreement was that she would always call when she got a babysitter for the night. She didn't tell me that her husband had left her, and while it's obvious that I know that because he's living alone in the studio apartment below me, I don't know why or how to make the move. And I don't even know if I want her crying on my shoulder that the bastard cheated on her. He cheated on me too. Metaphorically, but I was hurt – and I can't cry on anyone's shoulder. I had to deal with it myself and now I want to move on. I'm about to turn forty. I can't believe what I've been through in the last couple of months. After all, I was in long-term relationships before and now I just wanted to find another one. And instead, I fell in love, childishly, got my heart broken, met my first love again, had a crazy week with a guy ten years younger than me and had dinner with Michael a few times.

He's put the Volvo away and now drives a Mercedes convertible. His ex-wife moved to Austria with the kids. We're not just lovers. Michael is a friend. A real friend. We're exactly the same. We want the same things in life. We do pretty much the same job. We even have the same cleaning lady. And we **hardly ever** have time for each other.

convertible

childishly = like a child

hardly ever – sotva kdy (skoro vůbec ne)

C1 + C2

happen to

move on

wreck



4.5

The milestone marking forty years of my life is approaching rapidly. I don't know why I've succumbed to the delusion that I must sort out my life by 40. Why did I think there would be a breakthrough? I've been clinging to the date of my 40th birthday as my **Judgement Day**. How did I come up with that bullshit? It will be a day like any other and I won't exactly be a *year* older, I'll just be a *day* older, like I'm always a day older than yesterday. The morning train is full of sexy happy dads, and I like chatting with them every now and then, flirting.

The milestone marking forty years of my life is coming. We will celebrate it with Michael in Cuba. He's a priceless friend. And his birthday is the same day as mine. We see each other when we both have time, which is rarely. In the morning, he likes to go back to his house overlooking the valley and the river. I have that longed-for casual relationship with him. I've found my peace, and there's been no breakthrough at all.

Jana has taken Peter into her arms. He's moved back in with her, but whenever I see him, he gives me that pleading look. As if I it was me who dragged him away from his family and then dumped him. I played no part in it. I was emotionally deep in it, but I only touched his freezing face with my icy hand once, so physically our relationship was literally cold!

You can't talk about *heat* with Michael either. It's *warm*. We are like a married couple who have been through everything together and nothing can surprise them. We came to this conclusion after knowing each other for a few months. It's like we've been together since always and could stay that way forever. When we make love, it's not wild; it's comforting. Temporary passion, flare, temporary harmony. Friendship, peace, serenity, and contentment. Our 40th birthday is on December 24th.

Judgement Day = soudný den

delusion – opak od "illusion"

flare = passion

bullshit *

C1 + C2

clinging

comforting

dumped

longed for

serenity

succumbed



EXERCISE (4)

This is Johnny. Would you like to describe him?

His looks as well as his personality based on the text above...



LEARNING TIP



Imperial vs. Metric System

Length and distance (délka a vzdálenost)

1 inch = 2.5 centimetres

1 foot = 30 centimetres

1 mile = 1.6 kilometres

Expressing people's height

 5 foot 5 inches = 168 cm

 6 foot 6 inches = 180 c m

Volume (objem)



1 pint = 0,568 l = velké pivo

half pint = malé pivo



glass of wine = 175 ml

large glass of wine = 250 ml



5. Selfish Michael

5.1

I think I've been indulging myself in happiness for too long. And no **supreme power** ever likes to see that. Since I was much younger, I've been trying to keep my life in balance and fit into the grey average in God's database, not to stand out too much. I can imagine the bearded grandpa, or maybe the spaghetti monster, just a materialized idea of God, looking at the world balance statistics every Sunday when he's resting after work, and as soon as someone exceeds the average amount of happiness, he immediately slaps them on the wrist. On Monday. That's probably why most people hate Mondays.

I guess I was out of the long-term average and my God took his revenge. And that's why my flat is ruined. A pipe burst in the wall. Just as I was on a business trip, so by the time anyone got into the apartment, it was too late to save valuables. The things that mattered to me. But what the hell, it's just material things, maybe my God wants me to rise above it and start appreciating real, essential values again.

When I got back to my destroyed apartment, I felt like crying. Martin had taken care of everything, as the owner of the house and my close friend he had the keys to my apartment, he had called me and started to fix up the mess, he had already arranged for the reconstruction, but I still felt terribly sorry for it – the apartment is all I have. I mean I don't own it, I'm renting it, but it was my refuge. I loved it. I belonged there. It was my heaven on earth. And now I have nothing. I was **expelled from paradise**, and I have nowhere to go. Oh yeah, I do – It's just... Not where I would willingly go under any other circumstances.

expelled from paradise - vyhnání z ráje
supreme power – vyšší moc
reconstruction

C1 + C2
exceeds
indulging
paradise
refuge



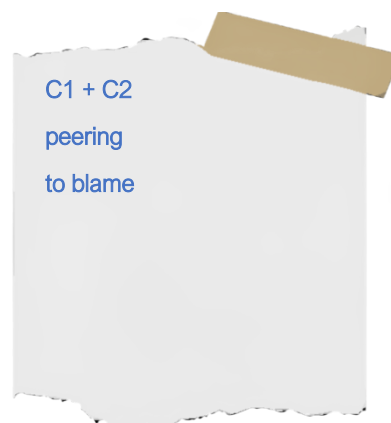
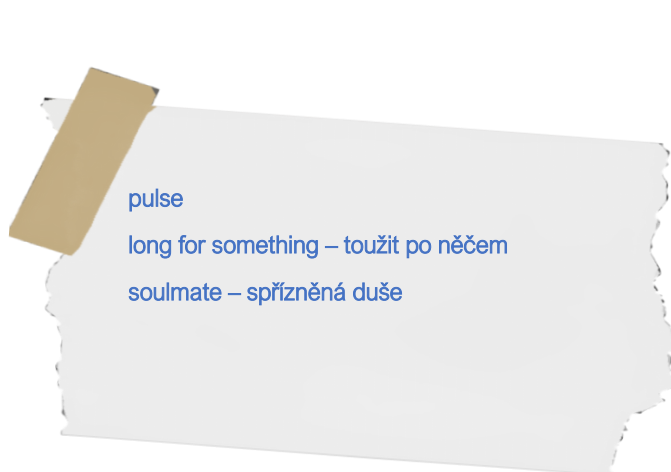
5.2

Martin offered me the studio apartment on the ground floor, no one had lived there since Peter had moved out. However, I couldn't possibly live in an apartment with a window only three feet above the ground, I'd be scared. And on top of that – maybe I should say especially – I couldn't stay in an apartment where Peter once lived.

Even though nothing actually happened between us, neither good nor bad, I just couldn't get the memory of him and what he had meant to me out of my head. When Martin mentioned the studio apartment, my pulse raced. I turned down his generous offer, but I wasn't turning down the apartment, I was turning down Peter, refusing to go through what I had been through a year ago.

But the worst part is that I'm here anyway, and I couldn't leave that renewed **longing for** Peter behind the door. It was here with me, in the small room, peering at me from every corner, sitting behind my neck, getting in my way all the time. And I don't know whether to blame it on my weakness or on my punishing God, or if it was quite simply Michael's fault, because he was selfish, a coward and an asshole.

He never said he loved me. So, he took no responsibility for me. I don't blame him. I wasn't looking for love, I was looking for peace. And with Michael, I got it, and for a long time, I was happy. If it hadn't been for the flooded apartment, I'd never have gotten to really know him. Maybe that was my God's goal – maybe he didn't want to destroy my apartment. Maybe he just wanted to show me a close-up of the person I had decided to trust. To count on. With whom I began to share the part of my life that needed a partner. A friend. **A soulmate.**





5.3

In short, whatever my God wanted, he started by flooding my apartment, depriving me of a friend, depriving me of peace, and now, perhaps, depriving me of my sanity. I've been going over it over and over, and this time I refuse to admit that I love Peter. God's just testing me. Strength of my character. If I succumb. But I won't.

I know it's just a memory. I know it was **one-sided** and purely platonic. It was crazy, and I should laugh about it today. Why am I crying then? It's clearly Michael's fault. He **screwed me over**. No, that would be unfair. He never promised me anything. He had no responsibility for me. He just **turned out to be** a selfish man who doesn't care about anyone else.

You've got a flooded apartment, oh no, that's terrible. What are you gonna do? Where are you gonna go? I couldn't believe my ears. Where am I going to, my friend? Where am I going to, you jerk? Don't worry, I'm not going to your place. **Shove** your house overlooking the forest and the river **up your ass!** We're not partners. I'm just your whore, you can come to me whenever you want to. Otherwise, no commitments. I wanted a relationship without infatuation, but for God's sake, I didn't mean completely emotionless! With no respect. And I guess I didn't say that loud enough in the beginning. I made a mistake. I was living in an illusion that I didn't share with anyone. I didn't know there wasn't a friend next to me in bed. It was an enemy. I feel like crying. And vomiting, too.

infatuation – zamilovanost

one-sided – jednostranný

screwed me over – vykašlal se na mě

turned out to be – ukázal se být

emotionless = without emotions

shove (something) up your ass *

jerk *

whore *

C1 + C2

purely

sanity

succumb

vomiting



5.4

I've never wanted a man all to myself. If he didn't belong to another woman, it was important that he at least belonged to himself. Not too submissive and eager to be tied down. Michael was brilliant, smart, and witty, reserved and cautious. I needed him. And **he turned his back on me**. I didn't say I wanted to reconsider our relationship. Nor that I expected commitment, that I wanted him all to myself, that I was going to control him from now on. Hell, I just said my flat was in ruins! And he betrayed me.

He didn't give me a single word of excuse for me to doubt that he was abandoning me; because when I really needed something, I became a nuisance.

And so here I am, in Peter's studio apartment, on my third day. I'm crying and getting drunk. I'm mourning a friend I couldn't lose because I never had one. I'm whining about the betrayal. I cry for the love I felt and **stomped to dust** because of a man **who wasn't worth it**. I know I couldn't have Peter. But it was nice to dream of him then. Nicer than what I dream of now.

he turned his back on me
stomped to dust – zadupat v prach
(not) to be worth it – (ne)stát za to

C1 + C2
mourning
reconsider
whining



EXERCISE (5)

This is Michael. Would you like to describe him?

His looks as well as his personality based on the text above...

Why do you think he has been pictured from the back?



LEARNING TIP



DIFFERENT SPELLING



colour	color
favourite	favorite
neighbour	neighbor
centre	center
recognise	recognize
realise	realize
organise	organize
travelling, travelled	traveling, traveled
programme	program



6. My Older Sister

6.1

A bitter, angry alcoholic. I really don't want to end up like this. I think I'm over it now. The **booze** has wiped out the bitter self-pity from my brain, and by the time I get back to my **renovated** apartment in a few weeks, I'll be myself again. Faithful to myself. I'm forty years old. I stopped drinking after three days, I stopped crying. I feel dizzy and sick. I'm starting a new life. A new life. If you don't belong to anybody, then nobody cares. No one worries about you. And nobody helps you. Being single and independent is good, but I'm **running on empty** now. That part of my life is surely behind me.

I want... I've learned a hard lesson, and I know I want someone to care about me. Even at the cost of belonging to him. My God has allowed me to be charmed by Michael, a nice quiet guy from whose cold arms I'm now walking away, with my heart trampled, even without putting my heart into the relationship. My God allowed it, taught me a lesson. No, you can't have a relationship without love. Without infatuation and passion, perhaps. But not without love. I was wrong. But how am I supposed to start looking for *love* now? I have no idea how to do that. I've spent my whole life mocking it. And when it came up, like last year with Peter, I wasted it. I didn't want it. And now I do.

I'd rather be in love than empty like this. No, God didn't **slap me on the wrist** for my over average contentment. My God has been giving me signs for a long time, but since I was blind to them, he must have kicked my ass pretty hard. **Serves me right.**

booze – chlast
serves me right – dobře mi tak
slap on the wrist – plácnout přes prsty
running on empty = not having enough energy
renovated

C1 + C2
charmed
mocking
trampled



6.2

A couple of days before that fatal business trip concluded with the saddest homecoming, I was already thinking about how the **intimacy** had gradually faded away from our relationship. I liked that sex with Michael was calm and straightforward, reliably satisfying to my physical being. No excesses, and not much emotion, just playing it safe, what else would one discover in their forties? It was fulfilling, but it was just a natural act between a man and a woman the way Mother Nature had arranged it.

Lately, we've stopped satisfying each other. No, that's not accurate, I'm not saying sex was bad, we just sort of stopped doing it altogether over time. Sex wasn't bad. There just was no sex at all. When I **realized**, we weren't attracted to each other, I thought it was just temporary. That it was normal, that it would pass. I didn't think it was over. Until I started being a nuisance. Until I threatened his **privileged** privacy. But I had never seen this wall between us before. And I hit it at full speed and broke my neck.

Today I was reassured that starting a new life is **much easier said than done**. What would that life be like? And what will be the new roles for others in it? Should I completely stop thinking that with a new partner it will also be about sex? I don't know where to start. Like Martin, for instance. The perfectly shaped miniature of a man... He's thoughtful, witty, and smart. Hardworking and rich. And he likes me. And I like him in every way. But he's too short. He's a dwarf. And now I'm asking, does that mean I'm too shallow? Should I rise above it? Or do I have the right to keep to myself in this respect? Do I have to be attracted to my new man, my partner? Can I be totally unattracted to him? Starting a new life is a much harder task than it seems. How do I determine what will be new and what will be **privileged** to stay the same?

intimacy

privileged

much easier said than done – snáz řekne než udělá

🌱 realized 🏰 realised

C1 + C2

concluded

determine

excesses

fulfilling

reassured



6.3

Starting a new life is a big project and I must divide it into sub-tasks.

I'd like to put *breaking the traitor's nose* at the top of the list. Or to **bash up** the **son-of-a-bitch!** But I can't blame Michael **endlessly**. I can't accuse him unfairly. He didn't promise me anything. It's just me... I expected more from him than he was willing to give. It's my fault, I've been so focused on keeping all the men away from me, or more accurately, from my feelings, that I've forgotten to look after myself in the same way. I involved my feelings in my relationship with Michael, which was a mistake. Just mine. I betrayed myself. And I've already got a good slap. So, I'm ticking the first item on my to-do list as done. What's next?

Well, that's another **dirty shot**. My God is crazy. Or perhaps he lost me in a card game to the devil, who is now very eagerly taking care of my new life. My sister called me. The oldest. She said her husband was cheating on her. Why is she telling *me*? Because I'm an expert on married men? Surely not. Surprise, surprise! She's calling me precisely because I'm her sister. She needs someone to confide in, and she figured I'd understand her best. So, it's because I'm an expert on married men, right? Oh no, why am I being **sarcastic**? She's calling me because I'm not married and I'm not going to take it personally. A married woman would give her advice based on her life and her guy. But she doesn't want advice. She wants somebody to listen. And she wants encouragement. And what am I supposed to say? Dear sister, if you want to be with him, be with him, and if you want to kick him out, kick him out! *It's not that simple* – she's defending herself. I get it. She doesn't want to kick him out, but she doesn't want to give him a free pass either. Should I tell her it's gonna be okay? Is that what she wants to hear? But she already has a theory. What if he ran into a woman like me – who doesn't want to take him, but just wants to borrow him?

bash up = attack violently and injure
dirty shot = unfair activity
endlessly = without end
son of a bitch *
sarcastic

C1 + C2
confide in somebody



6.4

For God's sake, **sis!** **Get a grip!** Being on my side of the triangle is fine. Not being on the wife's side. I'd never like to experience that. I'd tell a man who did that to me to go fuck himself. Actually, I did... I wrote Peter off because he cheated on me. It was all only in my head, and even that was enough for me to dump him. It's always nice to be the one getting the attention, but it's never nice to be the one being betrayed and cheated on. I know that now. And so should my sister. *Don't you think I should find someone too?* She asks at the end. A-ha! That's the point! I have to laugh. My sister wants me to confirm that she has the right to have an affair when her husband has one too. But how am I supposed to start a new life, a better life, let a new man into it, with all the commitments, when the very next day I'm supposed to bless the breaking of such a union of my own sisters?

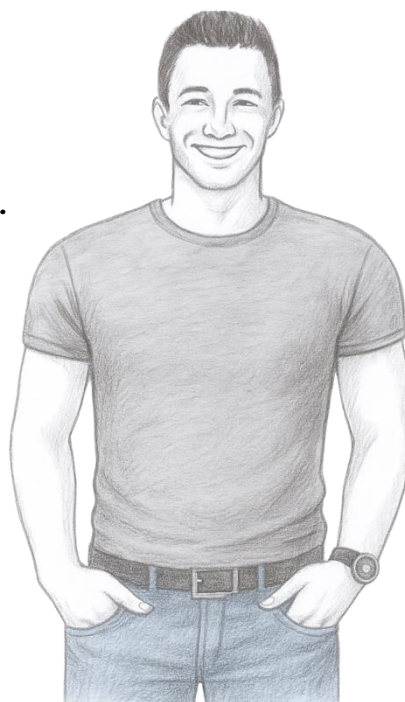
Starting a new life is much harder than it seems. There is nothing you can take in your hand, tear to pieces and burn. Starting a new life means changing your attitude. It's to reassess your values. Or, more precisely, to prioritize your values. And that's not easy.



EXERCISE (6)

This is Martin. Would you like to describe him?

His looks as well as his personality based on the text...





7. My New Life

7.1

My priority number one: I'm not gonna lie. (But neither tell the truth at all costs.) A pipe burst in the wall and I'm dealing with deep **philosophical** questions. My personal God, I think you've made your point.


A few days ago, I was invited to a social event. In fact, I was invited a long time ago, it only took place a few days ago. I was supposed to go with Michael, but when things got so bad between us, I decided not to go. Not that I couldn't go without him, but I didn't want to go alone. I thought I had already started a new life when I slammed the door in Peter's face.

Michael was supposed to be the man for a new era, the partner for the rest of my life. I wanted to demonstrate it: gentlemen, I'm not free anymore. Those of you who had me, congratulations; bad luck to the rest of you. Sort of. But now I must admit to myself, in keeping with my priority number one, that *I am* free. And nobody cares. And it hurts so much. And I don't want to demonstrate that! Anyway, I did go to the party in the end.

I don't really want to recall the bits and pieces I remember. I don't think I've done anything to embarrass myself. Not **publicly**. Just a few small, private affairs. And one... A rather racy one. I'm afraid this is no way to start a new life. I ran into Sidney there. I was so embarrassed. Suddenly, for the first time in my life, it bothered me that I was in the company of a man who had seen me naked. And not only *seen*. God, I must have really started a new life. I must have really changed my attitude because I was incredibly ashamed and tried to hide in the crowd.



philosophical
publicly



C1 + C2
embarrass/ed
racy

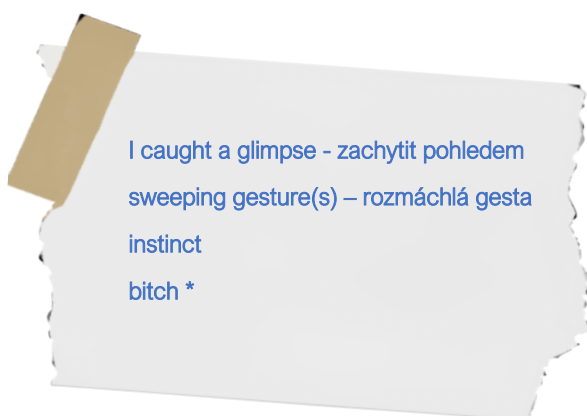


7.2

About an hour later, he stood next to me at the bar. He took off his jacket and rolled up the sleeves of his shirt. I couldn't look at his muscular arms and I couldn't not look at the same time. On his other side stood a beautiful young lady, his girlfriend. He ordered their cocktails and then turned to me. As if by accident, but I was too old to be convinced. But that gesture wasn't supposed to convince me. It was to convince her that he had only just noticed me. He wasn't an experienced seducer, he hadn't changed.

I don't think she was convinced either. Or maybe for a moment, but as soon as he introduced us, his beautiful Lucille's features stiffened. She took her cocktail, grabbed Sidney by the elbow and dragged him away. It was all clear to me. The fool told her about us! He confessed to her what he had done while she was away last year. He might not have said exactly who he was with, but her feminine **instinct** told her right away. Something like "I'd recognize that **bitch** of yours at a glance", or something like that.

A moment later, I **caught a glimpse** of them arguing. They were standing off to the side, at the far end of the hall, and I didn't need to hear a word to be able to interpret what was going on. After all the **sweeping gestures**, she finally allowed him to hug her. One more kiss on that cheeky little nose of hers. And they were good again. Well, that's what it looks like when you belong to someone and that someone loves you back and cares for you and about you. And I'd like to experience that as well. But this handsome, hairy redhead has his princess already.





7.3

The first sign which I missed wasn't the disappearing sex from our relationship. It came much earlier, almost as if the signs were coming from the beginning, as if I was never meant to be with Michael. But it was just little things. The first big one came in the form of a forgotten makeup **pouch**. Apparently, my God initially intended "*a nod to the wise*" and when I dully ignored all the hints, he had no choice but to resort to the "*rod to otherwise*" phase.

I spent one whole day with Michael at his house. He was working on something I could help him with. We have similar jobs, in the same field of expertise, and I had a lot of experience with the particular subject he was working on. He prepared a great lunch, we made love in the garden in the afternoon; his house is conveniently located, because the **solitary** Michael doesn't like company, and no one can see much of his property from anywhere. In the evening we went to the theatre and then he drove me home. Quite simple.

I never spent the night at his place. I threw my casual clothes I had been wearing during the day into my bag and took my evening clothes out; and when he dropped me off in the evening, I had the bag with me. But in his bathroom, I left my makeup pouch by the mirror. I didn't look for it because it only contained the few pieces of makeup for the theatre. Dark eye shadows, **mascara**, **lip gloss**, in short, nothing I'd use every day.

A nod to the wise – rod to otherwise 😊

lip gloss – lesk na rty

mascara – řasenka

pouch – taštička, váček

solitary – samotářský

C1 + C2

dully



7.4

Somehow, I didn't notice that Michael hadn't called me for a couple of days. I was busy and we didn't usually call each other every day. But a week passed, and he didn't let me know how he was doing with the project I was helping him with. It occurred to me that something must have happened. I could have called him myself, but I subconsciously expected him to call and tell me about the results. I felt like he owed it to me for my help. At least he should've let me know. But he hadn't, and that was the first major sign I didn't get. I was worried that something had happened to him and called.

Everything was fine, he was just busy, and his kids were coming for the weekend. That was the third sign, by the way, but I figured that out much later too.

That evening **he came over to me** and put the pouch on the coffee table without a word when I wasn't looking. I brought us something to drink and casually pushed the pouch aside to make room for the glasses. **Damn**, what a mess, I thought. I pushed the pouch aside. Michael didn't speak for a long time. I figured his work didn't go well. And that he was angry with me because of that.

I was about to ask him when he said: *"Didn't you miss it?"*

I startled, because my first thought was that he was talking about sex; testing me to see how much I missed him. I couldn't believe he could ask me something like that.

"What do you mean?" I asked.

He pointed to the pouch. I stared at him, **uncomprehending**, and then realized that I must have left it at his place last time and that he had just brought it over.

"Oh... Not at all, it's an evening makeup, I didn't even notice it wasn't here, thanks."

He asked about the pouch, not the sex, ugh, I was relieved. But I shouldn't have been relieved. I should have grabbed him by his neat collar and kicked his ass through the door.

uncomprehending = not understanding

damn – sakra, kruci

he came over to me – přišel ke mně domů

C1 + C2

startled

subconsciously



7.5

I woke up abruptly in the night. No slow waking. Bang! Eyes wide open. **Recognition.** I had left my little pouch in his house, and in doing so, I had disrupted his world. I signalled that I wanted to share his space. That I would come back. That we belong together. I felt like I should **apologize** to him. It may not have been my intention, but I can see how he might have interpreted it. I didn't want to make any commitments myself; I wouldn't have been upset by a little thing like that, but I understand that Michael might have been **alarmed**.

In the morning, when he was leaving, I casually thanked him for the pouch once more. *"It would be embarrassing if I had to call all the guys, I had spent the night with recently to check where the pouch had been left."*

His face had finally changed that bitter expression since last night. He smiled. *"You're a great woman,"* he said and kissed me, something he had never done before on his way out. I was glad I was able to explain that I didn't want to move in with him. But I should have been warned by his genuine distress. And by the fact that the kids were staying with him for the weekend. That was the second sign. His kids are too young to just be at his place for the weekend. But I missed that sign, too.

I must admit that my God was trying really hard, and that I kind of deserved the flooded apartment. It happened for me to recover. Suddenly it all dawned on me. Michel's ex-wife wanted to get back together with him. She started bringing his kids around. And he didn't tell me. And when I was in my ruined apartment, hoping he'd lend me one of his many rooms, he completely renounced me. Not because he was afraid that I'd get too attached to him, but because his whole family had already moved back in with him. While I was away on business, he changed his life. Quietly in secret. Without a word. Like a selfish coward and a traitor.

alarmed (alarm)

recognition (recognize)

🌿 apologize 🍷 apologise

C1 + C2

abruptly

apologize

dawned

distress

renounced



EXERCISE (7)

Do you think that she will ever be able to change her life?
What should she have done in the past to make her life better?
Support your opinion. (Try to practise the 3rd conditional.)

💡 LEARNING TIP 💡

Proverbs – přísloví

A nod to the wise, rod to otherwise. – Chytrému napověz, hloupého trkni.

Birds of a feather flock together. – Vrána k vráně sedá.

What goes around, comes around. – Jak se do lesa volá, tak se z lesa ozývá.

Look before you leap. – Dvakrát měř, jednou řež.

First come, first served. – Kdo dřív přijde, ten dřív mele.



8. Tony of the Past

8.1

My priority number two: I won't be **naïve** anymore. I pushed this task up on my list of priorities when I found out that Michael no longer counts on me in his life. I *found out* because he didn't tell me. I learned it by accident. I don't want to think about it anymore. In short, I won't be naïve in my new life. I'd better say: I won't be stupid.

When they finally fixed up my apartment and I started picking out new furniture and complained to Martin that I didn't know if I'd be able to move back in, he immediately had a proposal for me. His first few words seemed to be directed to the two of us living together, so I stopped listening and just smiled politely. I was only alarmed when he said he could rent the house right away. Excuse me? Next, I understood that he was buying a house that was being sold by a divorcing couple so they could pay off the **mortgage** and then rent two separate apartments. The lady with the kids would move in here instead of me, my place is big enough for three people. I'd stay downstairs in the studio and Martin would rent out the newly bought house. I was terrified.

I understand that he could rent my place for a better price than the ridiculous amount I'm paying him, but he's not just going to kick me out, is he? I'll pay him a reasonable market price from now on! But it's not about the money. It's about the lady with the kids. He wants her to come live here. He winked at me. I understood. Yeah, I got it. This apartment was for his favourite girl. It hadn't worked out with me. A divorcing lady with kids might be happy to accept his tempting offer. I get it. I'm starting a new life. This phase is definitely over. But I'm not staying in that studio apartment. Because that's where Peter keeps living. His ghost and my memories of his lovely brown eyes. And memories of my pain.





8.2

Despite the small private embarrassment at our last meeting, I received an invitation to the next event signed by Tony. This gentleman is just great. We worked together in the same company a few years ago. I hate to admit it, but it's been twenty years since that moment.

Twenty years ago, we were colleagues. And about three years ago, I started **freelancing** on a project at his new company. I guess it was because of our old friendship that I won the tender there. Michael tried to get in several times, but he was unlucky, I was already there. He laughed about it and said he didn't believe I was better than him, but that it was obvious that the owner had a thing for beautiful women.

Now as an **afterthought**, perhaps that was another sign. Michael was serious, he would never admit that I was better than him at anything. In Tony's defence, I must say he has no such weakness. In fact, he's quite stern, and the **wobbly female bits** don't stand a chance with him. He doesn't like **cheesiness**. I think he chose me because he knew me, he could rely on me, he could trust me, he knew what to expect from me. It wasn't about whether he liked me as a woman. He was always very reserved.

Sometimes, twenty years ago, I even tried to slip into cheesiness to tease him a little, but I failed. **On the contrary**, when I worked hard all day, hunched over some tasks, he would ask me out for a drink and then we would end up in his **bachelor** apartment, talk about life into the night, crawl into bed in the morning, and before we got up a few hours later, we would make love. We never did it face to face, never looked each other in the eye. We took turns in the bathroom and continued to act like we didn't know what had happened. As if nothing had happened.

afterthought = thinking after
bachelor – starý mládenec
freelancing – na volné noze, osvč
cheesiness – lacinost
on the contrary – naopak
wobbly female bits – dámské vnady

C1 + C2
hunched
stern
tender



8.3

I thought it was funny, I thought he just didn't know how to talk to me afterwards, so he pretended indifference; until one day, on a rather odd occasion, I realized that this was his style. He didn't pretend anything. The awareness of our intimacy, our **conspiracy**, was enough for him. He just didn't feel the need to show off. Next time it was just like that again. Actually, it was like that every time.

I was twenty, he was a little older. He set the bar high, with this secret, yet undisguised relationship. From then until now, I've always wanted it like that with every man. Intense in the intimacy and casual in the daily routine. I've based my expectations of my entire future love life on the relationship with Tony.

And after that brief encounter with Sidney and his beauty at the previous party, I think I got a little drunk and started discussing our past with Tony. And I think I blamed him for the assholes I had run into in the past year. The selfish cowards who had abused and betrayed me. But Tony's just great, he took it with grace, treated me nicely, called me the next day to see if I had **made it home** okay and if I had gotten over my low spirits. And now he sent me a **handwritten** invitation. I'm seriously thinking about going abroad. For a year or two, get out of this world full of guys who've seen me naked. I'm not able to start a new life here.

conspiracy

handwritten

if I made it home – jestli jsem to zvládl domů

C1 + C2

awareness

grace

indifference

intense

undisguised



EXERCISE (8)

This is Tony. Would you like to describe him?

His looks as well as his personality based on the text above...



💡 **LEARNING TIP** 💡

Přijďte na návštěvu! – Come to see us!

Minulý víkend jsme navštívili babičku – We went to see our grandma last weekend.

postavit vodu (na čaj, kávu) – to put the kettle on

Babička postavila vodu, když jsme přišli. – Granny put the kettle on when we arrived.

uvařit kafe – to make coffee

Prosím tě, uvaříš kafe? – Could you make the coffee please?

dát si něco – to have something

Dáš si chlebiček nebo zákusek? – Are you going to have a sandwich or a cake?

Pojďme na kafe! – Let's go for coffee! / Let's get a cup of coffee!



9. My New Neighbour

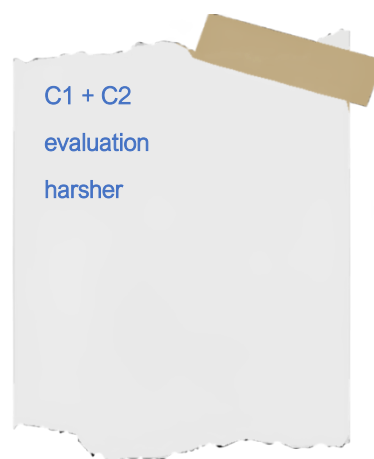
9.1

Going away was a good idea. Three months criss-crossing South America with a bunch of **enthusiasts** who got together via Facebook. Almost everyone on this adventure was dealing with a similar life crisis like me. An interesting mix of European nationalities, ages, and **intellects**, with the same motivation and a common goal: to have fun, see a little bit of the world, take our minds off our problems, mature. In the end, I had to **let go of** all those expectations, as I just saw a little bit of the world.

I didn't have much fun. We mostly dealt with quite difficult situations, and when it wasn't a question of survival, then it was about basic human needs; and when external factors were in the balance, it **came down to** personal problems. Anyway, I learned a lot in the process. To be tolerant. More patient. I learned to rely on others, my life depended on it more than once. To spend day by day with people who don't all suit me, having to respect their opinions, their right to their own mistakes. But I didn't manage to take my mind off my problems.

I guess I've gotten over the episode with Michael. He was a friend I cared about, but a wimp who couldn't honestly say he was changing his life and his relationship with me. Just a wimp. A rude wimp. But no harsher evaluation because I can already accept his right to be who he is.

I've also been thinking about the God signs all along. If perhaps there could have been more of them in my life. How many have I ignored? And what was it supposed to teach me? Did the flooded apartment mean *"move out"*?

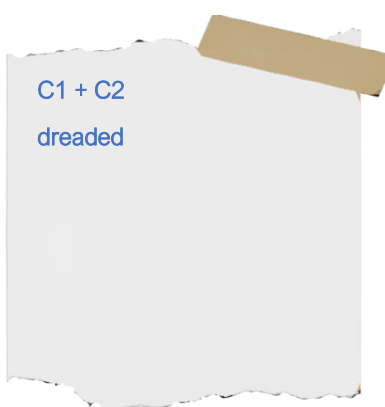




9.2

I agreed with Martin that I would stay temporarily in the studio apartment, and he would rent my old apartment to his new favourite. I went abroad as I couldn't live in the studio apartment and couldn't decide what else to do. I needed a break. Keep emotional distance. Time and space distance, too. But I hadn't found any answers on my journey, and the last few days before my return, I was thinking more and more about Peter and how my fantasies would haunt me again once I enter *his* apartment. None of that has gone off my mind, not even after three months on the other side of the world. I carried it with me everywhere, in my head. In my heart.

I was absolutely desperate about my coming home again and decided to delay the dreaded moment a little longer by flying with Rachel and Nick to Frankfurt – their destination; and continuing on to Prague two days later. They let me stay in Nick's apartment and they went to Rachel's. It was a wonderful experience for them. They wanted to get married, and they wanted to get to know each other well before they jumped into living together and other commitments. They wanted to see if they could handle being together day by day, dealing with crises, if they could tolerate each other, respect each other. See if they'd still love each other afterwards. It worked for them. They were amazing together, and now they're gonna get married. Meanwhile, after a long flight and thanks to crossing several time zones, I collapsed into Nick's bed from exhaustion and slept through most of my short break in Frankfurt.





9.3

A couple of hours before my flight to Prague I couldn't bear it any longer and called Martin. *What does my current apartment look like? Am I not in for another shock like last time?* When he assured me that everything was as it should be, I was even more terrified of returning. *Martin, I don't want to go back to this stupid town,* I whined. *Do you have a spare flat in Prague? Or anywhere else? I really can't handle it, and don't ask me why.* I almost cried. I couldn't take it anymore. It was too much.

Martin said he'd arrange it. He's so... he's so reliable, he's always where he's supposed to be, and he always does the right thing. He promised to pick me up at the airport and take me to another apartment. I had a **hell of a luck** because while I was away, he bought two new apartments on the outskirts of Prague, one is already occupied and the other still vacant. And it's **furnished!** I can **come by** and get my personal belongings from the studio apartment any time. What an incredibly perfect man! And a friend. Isn't this another sign I've been ignoring?

One can definitely breathe here. A nice apartment in a nice place. Nothing explicitly beautiful, but new, clean, spacious, and most importantly furnished with furniture that reminds me of nothing at all. Completely **impersonal**. I don't know how long I'll stay here, but I'll most likely stay here a while. I'm making coffee and waiting for somebody. I've been keeping to my list of priorities since my return.

First, I'm not lying any more. Not even to myself. I guess that's why I can breathe easier. I try not to ignore the signs of my God. I'm so easily in love. Smiling. No more sleepless nights, no more headaches, no more **heartache**.

come by – zajít někam, (za)stavit se někde
hell of a luck – z pekla štěstí
heartache – podobně jako “headache”
furnished = with furniture
impersonal = not personal

C1 + C2
explicitly
spacious



9.4

Martin changed my whole life during that short journey from the airport. He helped me start over, pick up where it was still nice and where I had messed it up with my own **stupidity**. Or maybe with my **impulsivity**. He brought me back here completely transformed.

I went to the studio apartment to get my things with complete ease. I checked all the corners, but there was no anger, not even the slightest remorse. It was just an ugly apartment with a window three feet off the ground facing the parking lot. I gathered my belongings into a few boxes, just clothes, a laptop, folders of personal papers, a couple of books, two mugs. I left the rest of my stuff there, so that it was easier for Martin to rent the place. In case he runs into another guy whose wife kicked him out. Another Peter. Another poor dumped husband like him.

I am also trying very hard not to be naïve. I don't fool myself with illusions or hopes, and at the same time, I don't just let myself go with the flow of life. When I want to do something, I do it. I say what's on my mind. Fate needs a little help. My God gives me signs, but I must live my life. That's why I have my new love. New? Let's call it old love in a new light. I'm being honest. I say out loud that I care about him. I keep showing that I enjoy *belonging to him*. I don't explicitly reject all commitments. I'm not sure if it was because of the traveling through a strange world with strangers or if my **guardian** angel helped me do that. But I have managed to start a new life. I have the same job, I see the same people, I work for Tony, and I run into Sidney now and then. He's married to the beautiful Lucille, and he still lowers his eyes when we meet. I don't even think about the fact that he saw me naked. I don't think about his naked body anymore, the memory of his red hairy belly is a pure image, there is no spark in it any longer. I'm a jump away. Thank you, my personal God, you bearded old man, spaghetti monster!

guardian – like a guard

impulsivity

stupidity

C1 + C2

remorse



9.5

My priority number three: I'll listen better. I will not **jump to conclusions**! God, I promise not to anticipate, not to pass judgment until I know all the circumstances.

On the way back from the airport, I listened to Martin's story about fate as if in a trance. About love. About his **beloved** Jana, who he had known for years, fate had brought her back into his path married and with kids. She's getting divorced now.

*She should never have married that cocky **macho**, but then she wanted to keep the marriage for the kids, but what kind of life is that – without love, slaving to a family that doesn't work, sleeping with a guy she's not attracted to, spending time with him when she doesn't love him, lying and cheating?*

So, he convinced his dear Jana to get rid of the **incompetent** bastard, get a divorce, sell the house, and move in with the kids to my old place. And for her to feel no remorse because of breaking up the family and completely abandoning the father of her two children, Martin rented the jilted **loser** one of his new apartments. And that loser is now my **neighbor**.

I'm expecting him in a minute. We're going at it slowly, but I feel pretty sure we're going for the same goal. I refused to let this sign go to waste. I seized the moment and **wouldn't let go**. I was worried that maybe he wouldn't want a relationship when his marriage had totally blown up. When his wife cheated on him and eventually left him. When he is getting divorced and leaves his two kids far away with a strange man. I thought he'd give up, at least for a while, on all women, that unfaithful **treacherous brood**.

beloved = loved

incompetent = not competent

jump to conclusions – dělat ukvapené závěry

not let go – nepustit

treacherous brood – zrádné plémě

loser

macho

🌿 neighbor 🌿 neighbour

C1 + C2

anticipate

cocky

jilted

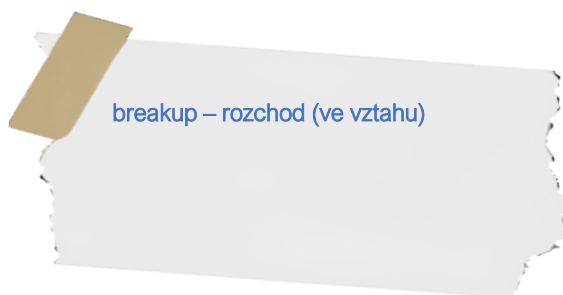
unfaithful



9.6

And then I put number three on my list of priorities: listen better, don't prejudge nor jump to conclusions. He said he wanted and needed badly to belong to someone. He wants to trust someone again. That his marriage hadn't worked for a couple of years before the final **breakup**. That's why he moved out last year, not to live with another woman, but away from Jana, otherwise he'd have killed her. I promise I'll never jump to conclusions again!

Knocking on the door. One last look in the mirror. Those fatal leather pants still look good on me. If Peter can't remember if they're really leather, he can try and find out again today. I hope he will.



EXERCISE (9)

What could happen next?

(Try to practise sentences in the 2nd conditional.)



AMENDMENTS

Vocabulary lists

Who is who cheat-sheet

Online lesson access

Fun fact



VOCABULARY LIST SORTED BY LEVELS IN ALPHABETICAL ORDER

LEVEL B2

You should know these words from the story if you are aiming at the B2 level examination:

WORD	SECTION and your notes
abandoning	5.4, 9.5	
abused	8.3	
accuse	6.3	
acquired	4.2	
actively	2.2	
affair	6.4	
affairs	7.1	
agreed with	9.2	
agreement	4.4	
aimlessly	3.1	
anger	9.4	
anxiety	1.2	
apparently	3.3, 7.3	
appreciating	5.1	
aside	7.4	
assured	9.3	
attracted to	4.1, 6.2, 9.5	
awfully	2.1	
balance	5.1, 9.1	
bang	7.5	
banned	2.3	<i>forbid, not allow</i>
belong/ed	5.1, 7.5	
belongings	9.3, 9.4	
betray/al	5.4	
betrayed	5.4, 6.3, 6.4, 8.3	
bless	6.4	
blink	1.1	
bouncing	1.1	
breakthrough	4.5	
burst	5.1, 7.1	
came up	6.1	
care for	1.3	



casually	2.2, 7.4, 7.5	
catch up on	4.1	
cautious	1.3, 5.4	
cell	4.3	
circumstances	2.2, 5.1, 9.5	
collapsed	9.2	
combine	2.1	
come up with	4.5	
comfort	2.3	
commitment(s)	1.2, 5.3, 5.4, 6.4, 7.5, 9.2, 9.4	
committal	1.4, 2.2, 4.2	
complex	4.1	
confessed	7.2	
confidence	4.1	
constantly	3.2	
content	3.2	
contentment	4.5, 6.1	
conveniently	7.3	
cope	3.3	
count on	5.2	
courage	1.1	
coward	5.2, 7.5, 8.3	
cowards	8.3	
crawl	8.2	
crises	9.2	
crisis	9.1	
current	9.3	
cheated (on)	3.2, 3.3, 4.4, 6.3, 6.4, 9.5	
cheating (on)	3.3, 6.3, 9.5	
cheeky	7.2	
darling	3.3	
database	5.1	
deal	3.2	
decline	2.4	
deliberately	1.1	
demonstrate	7.1	
depriving	5.3	
desire	3.2	
desperate	9.2	
devil	6.3	
displeasure	1.3	<i>not pleasure</i>



disrupted	7.5	
disturbed	4.3	
divine	4.3	
divorcing	8.1	
dizzy	6.1	
eager/ly	5.4, 6.3	
ease	9.4	
elegant	2.4	
embarrassment	8.2	
emotion(s)	1.4, 6.2	
emotional/ly	2.2, 4.5, 9.2	
emotionally		
encounter	8.3	
encouragement	6.3	
entire	4.3, 4.4, 8.3	
episode	9.1	
era	7.1	
escalator	1.1	
eternity	1.1	<i>eternal</i>
eventually	9.5	
exceptions	2.2	
exhaustion	9.2	
expectations	8.3, 9.1	
expertise	7.3	
expression	7.5	
external	9.1	
factors	9.1	
faded away	6.2	
faithful	6.1	
fantasies	9.2	
fatal	6.2, 9.6	
fate	4.2, 9.4, 9.5	
features	7.2	
figured	6.3, 7.4	
firmly	3.3	
focused	6.3	
foolish	4.2	
forbid	2.3	
force	1.3	
freedom	3.2	
frighten	3.3	



gathered	9.4	
gentleman	8.2	
gentlemen	7.1	
gently	3.3	
genuine	7.5	<i>real, honest</i>
get away	2.4	
get / got into	2.4, 5.1	
get out of	3.2, 8.3	
get over	2.4	
get / got to	2.4	
get / got up	3.3, 8.2	
go through	5.2	
going over	5.3	
gradually	6.2	
grip	6.4	
harmony	4.5	
haunt	9.2	
heaven	5.1	
hell	4.3, 5.1, 5.4, 9.3	
hint(s)	2.3, 7.3	
ideal	2.3	
ignore/d	7.3, 9.1, 9.3	
ignoring	9.3	
image	9.4	
importantly	9.3	
incredibly	2.1, 2.2, 3.3, 7.1, 9.3	
initially	7.3	
inspires	1.2	
instantly	4.2	
intention	7.5	
interpret	7.2	
interpreted	7.5	
introduction	4.2	
irritated	3.2	
it seems	6.2, 6.4	
joy	1.4	
judging by	1.1	
judgment	9.5	
keep/ing to	6.2, 9.3	



lap	4.1	
let me	1.3, 7.4., 9.2	
let off	3.2	
lifestyle	3.2	
literally	4.5	
long term	4.4, 5.1	
look into	1.4	
loss	4.4	
lowers	9.4	
made for	2.4	
major	7.4	
marking	3.1, 4.5	
mature	9.1	
messed	9.4	
motivation	9.1	
muscular	3.3, 7.2	<i>with muscles</i>
nail	1.3	
naked	3.3, 7.1, 8.3. 9.4	
naughty	1.3	
neighbour	9.5	<i>neighbor (us)</i>
neither	2.4, 7.1	
nerves	2.2	
newly	8.1	
nicely	8.3	
nod/ded	3.1, 7.3	
nor	1.4, 5.2, 5.4, 9.6	
nuisance	5.4, 6.2	
occasionally	4.1	
occupied	9.3	
occurred	7.4	
odd	8.3	
originally	2.1	
outskirts	9.3	
overlooking	4.5, 5.3	
paces	4.2	
passion	4.5, 6.1	
pay off	8.1	
phase	7.3, 8.1	
physical/ly	2.3, 4.5, 6.2	
practical	2.2	



precisely	6.3	
prejudice	9.6	<i>(Pride & Prejudice - Pýcha a předsudek)</i>
pretend/ed	8.3	
priceless	3.1, 4.5	
priorities	8.1, 9.3, 9.6	
priority	7.1, 8.1, 9.5	
privacy	6.2	
process	9.1	
proof	4.2	
proposal	8.1	
rapidly	4.5	
reality	2.1	
reassess	6.4	<i>asses</i>
recall	7.1	
reject/ion	1.3, 4.1, 9.4	
relieved	3.1, 7.4	
rely on	8.2, 9.1	
remarks	1.3	
represented	2.1	
resist	1.2	
responsibility	3.2, 5.2, 5.3	
revenge	5.1	
rhythm	3.3	
ridiculous	3.2, 8.1	
rolled	4.3, 7.2	
ruined	5.1, 7.5	
run(s) / ran into	6.3, 7.1, 8.3, 9.4.	
sake	2.1, 4.3, 5.3, 6.4	
satisfy	3.2, 6.2	
satisfying	6.2	
scars	1.3	
seized	9.5	
senselessly	1.2	<i>without sense</i>
shallow	6.2	
sharply	1.4	
shiver	3.3	
show off	8.3	
schedule	4.4	
simply	5.2	
slammed	4.3. 7.1	
slap(s)	5.1, 6.1, 6.3	



slaving	9.5	<i>working as a slave</i>
slightest	9.4	
slightly	2.2	
slowing down	2.4	
sort out	4.5	
spirits	8.3	
squeezed	3.3	
stand by	1.1	
stand out	5.1	
stared	7.4	
staring	3.1, 4.2, 7.4	
state	2.1	
statistics	5.1	
steady	1.4	
steam	3.2	
stiff/ened	2.1, 7.2	
straightforward	6.2	
strength	5.3	
strictly	2.2	
stroke	4.1	
stun	1.1	
suicide	1.4	
surely	6.1	
survival	9.1	
swallow	2.2	
sweeping	7.2	
task(s)	4.3, 6.2, 8.1, 6.3, 8.2	
tease	8.2	
temporarily	9.2	
tempting	8.1	
theory	6.3	
thoughtful	6.2	
threatened	6.2	
thrilled	3.1	<i>excited</i>
tolerate	2.3, 9.2	
took over	4.2	
transformed	9.4	
trap/ped	4.1, 4.3	
treasure	4.2	
treated	8.3	
triangle	6.4	
turned out	5.3	



turned to	7.2	
unavailable	2.3, 4.4	
underestimated	2.3	
unfairly	6.3	
unfaithful	9.5	
unlike	3.3	
vacant	9.3	
waist	3.3	
warmth	1.1	
weakness	5.2, 8.2	
whereas	1.3	
whom	5.2	
willingly	5.1	
wise	7.3	<i>smart, clever</i>
witty	2.3, 5.4, 6.2	
wrist	5.1, 6.1	



LEVEL C1 & C2

You can learn these words from the story or find synonyms:

WORD	SECTION	SYNONYMS / EXPLANATIONS
abruptly	7.5	<i>suddenly B1 unexpectedly B2</i>
abs	3.3	<i>abdominal muscles</i>
aimlessly	3.1	<i>in all directions A2 wildly B2</i>
aisles	3.1	<i>path A2 corridor B2</i>
alarmed	7.5, 8.1	<i>afraid A2 frightened B1</i>
anticipate	9.5	<i>forecast B1 assume B2</i>
arousal	2.3	<i>excitement B1</i>
awareness	8.3	<i>information A2 experience B1</i>
belly	1.3, 1.4, 9.4	<i>front A2 solar B2</i>
beloved	9.5	<i>darling B2</i>
blame	5.2	<i>accuse B2 criticize B2</i>
bluntly	2.1	<i>frankly B1</i>
breastfeeding	1.3	<i>providing milk to babies with breasts</i>
cargo	4.2	
carload	1.2	<i>full carriage / railway wagon</i>
charmed	6.1	<i>attracted B1 fascinated B2</i>
cling/ing	1.2, 4.5	<i>fasten B1 grip B2</i>
cocky	9.5	<i>confident B1 arrogant B2</i>
comforting	4.5	<i>encouraging B1 heart-warming A2/B2</i>
commemorated	4.2	<i>recalled B2 memorized A2</i>
concluded	6.2	<i>finished A1 completed, ended A2</i>
confide in somebody	6.3	<i>trust B1 count on B2</i>
consistently	3.2	<i>always A1 constantly B2</i>
cookies	3.1	<i>biscuits A1</i>
crave	2.3	<i>dream A2 fancy, require B1</i>
crush	2.3	<i>love A1 passion B2</i>
crushed	3.3	<i>hurt A2 harmed B2</i>
cuffs	3.3	<i>end of sleeves B1</i>
dawned on	7.5	<i>hit A2 stroke B1</i>
determine	6.2	<i>choose A1 decide A2</i>
displaced	4.2	<i>removed B1</i>
distinct	2.2	<i>clear A2 evident B2</i>
distress	7.5	<i>pain A2 agony</i>
dreaded	9.2	<i>was afraid A2 feared B1</i>



dully	7.3	<i>in a silly / stupid way B1</i>
dump/ed	4.5, 6.4, 9.4	<i>kick(ed) out throw(n) away B1</i>
embarrass	7.1	<i>upset A2 make ashamed B1</i>
evaluation	9.1	<i>opinion B1 judgment B2</i>
exaggerating	2.2	<i>hyperbolize, dramatize</i>
exceeds	5.1	<i>be greater in number or size</i>
excesses	6.2	<i>extremes B2</i>
explicitly	9.3, 9.4	<i>clearly, exactly A2</i>
feminine	7.2	<i>of a female B1</i>
feverish	2.3	<i>nervous B1 distracted B2</i>
flawless	2.1	<i>perfect A2</i>
fleeting	3.3	<i>momentary, brief B1</i>
fulfilling	6.2	<i>good A1 satisfying, satisfactory B2</i>
furnished	9.3	<i>with furniture</i>
furnishings	4.1, 4.2	<i>furniture A2</i>
gaped	2.1	<i>draw breath in sharply</i>
glimmered	4.2	<i>shone (shine) B1 flashed B2</i>
grace	8.3	<i>style B1 charm B2</i>
harsher	9.1	<i>harder A1 unkind, unpleasant B1</i>
hesitation	4.3	<i>waiting A1 doubt B1</i>
hold back	1.1, 1.2, 2.2	<i>wait and do nothing</i>
hopelessly	3.2	<i>without hope</i>
hump	1.4	<i>bump B2</i>
hunched	8.2	<i>bent (bend) B2</i>
imperfections	2.3	<i>not perfect</i>
impersonal	9.3	<i>not personal</i>
indefinitely	1.1	<i>forever B1 endlessly B2</i>
indifference	8.3	<i>absence of feeling or interest</i>
indulging	5.1	<i>enjoying A1</i>
intense	8.3	<i>intensive B2</i>
internship	2.1	<i>work experience for students, graduates</i>
irises	2.1	<i>eye pupils, eyes A1</i>
irresistible	3.1	<i>fascinating B2</i>
jerk	1.1, 5.3	<i>jump A2 bastard</i>
jilted	9.5	<i>abandon B2</i>
long/ed/ing for	2.1, 4.5, 5.2	<i>dream A2 fancy, require B1</i>
milestone	3.1, 4.5	<i>important event B1 breakthrough B2</i>



milkmaid	1.3	<i>a woman feeding children with her breast</i>
moan	1.4	<i>make sound of sexual pleasure</i>
mocking	6.1	<i>laugh at A2 insult, make look ridiculous B2</i>
mode	1.4	<i>style, method B1</i>
mourning	5.4	<i>crying A2 be sad after losing someone</i>
move on	4.4	<i>go forward B1</i>
mundane	1.3	<i>boring A1 routine B1</i>
municipal	3.2	<i>of a city, public B1</i>
naive	8.1, 9.4	<i>simple A2 innocent B2</i>
occasional	1.3	<i>not frequent, not usual</i>
overwhelm	1.1	<i>overpower, triumph</i>
palm	1.1	<i>hand A1</i>
paradise	5.1	<i>heaven B2 Eden</i>
peeking	2.1	<i>looking A1</i>
peering	5.2	<i>looking A1</i>
pitfalls	3.2	<i>danger A1 risk B2</i>
pleading	4.3	<i>begging B2</i>
pregnancy	1.3	<i>being pregnant B1 expecting a baby</i>
primal	2.1	<i>primitive</i>
privileged	6.2	<i>allowed B1</i>
publicly	7.1	<i>being public B1</i>
pure/ly	5.3, 9.4	<i>only A1</i>
quilts	2.4	<i>blankets, bed covers A2</i>
quirks	2.3	<i>odd, peculiar B2</i>
racy	7.1	<i>sexual B2 erotic, vulgar, obscene</i>
random	1.4	<i>accidental B2</i>
reassured	6.2	<i>assured again B2</i>
recognition	7.5	<i>identification A2</i>
reconsider	5.4	<i>consider again B1</i>
refuge	5.1	<i>safe place A1 protecting place B2</i>
reluctant/ly	1.2, 2.2	<i>not wanting to do it; unwilling/ly</i>
remorse	9.4, 9.5	<i>feeling guilty B1</i>
renounced	7.5	<i>deny B2</i>
resumed	4.3	<i>began again A1 continued B1</i>
sanity	5.3	<i>mental health</i>
scenario	2.2	<i>plan A2 scheme B2</i>
seducer	7.2	<i>Casanova, Don Juan</i>
serenity	4.5	<i>peace B1</i>



sincere	1.3	<i>honest, reliable B1</i>
sleepless	1.4, 9.3	<i>without sleep</i>
solitary	7.3	<i>preferring to be alone</i>
sorrow	1.4	<i>worry A1 sadness, suffering B2</i>
spacious	9.3	<i>large A2</i>
spark	1.1, 1.4, 9.4	<i>single hint of fire B2</i>
sparkled	4.2	<i>shine (shone) B2</i>
stable	4.2	<i>still the same</i>
startled	7.4	<i>surprised A2 terrified B1</i>
stern	8.2	<i>serious, strict B1</i>
strolled	3.1	<i>walk slowly A1</i>
stubbornness	2.3	<i>determination B2 wanting things my way</i>
stunned	3.1	<i>surprised A2</i>
stung	3.2	<i>(sting) pain caused with a needle</i>
stupidity	9.4	<i>nonsense B2</i>
subconsciously	7.4	<i>mentally B2 intuitively</i>
subtly	6.2	<i>quietly, gently B1</i>
succumb/ed	4.5, 5.3	<i>give up B1 capitulate</i>
sulking	2.4	<i>being sad A1</i>
tangle	4.2	<i>circling B1</i>
tenant	4.1	<i>resident B2 person who leases a place</i>
tender	8.2	<i>business offer, competition A2</i>
tilted	1.1	<i>bend (bent), shifted B2</i>
timidly	3.1	<i>shy, shyly B1 nervously B2</i>
tiptoe(s)	1.2, 3.1	<i>point(s) of toes A2</i>
torn apart	2.2	<i>broken A2</i>
traitor	3.3, 6.3, 7.5,	<i>who betrayed</i>
trampled	6.1	<i>stepped on</i>
tucked away	4.2	<i>hide (hidden) B1</i>
undisguised	8.3	<i>no disguised B2 not camouflaged</i>
upcoming	1.3	<i>happening soon</i>
virginity	4.2	<i>the state of not having sex yet</i>
vomiting	5.3	<i>be sick, food going up from stomach A2</i>
whined/whining	5.4, 9.3	<i>cried, crying A2 complained, complaining B1</i>
wink/ed	4.1, 8.1	<i>blink/ed with an eye B2</i>
withdrawal	2.4	<i>missing something very badly</i>
wreck	4.4	<i>mess, ruin B1</i>



WHO IS WHO CHEAT-SHEET



The main character. What's her name?

Johnny



Martin

Michael



Peter

Sidney



Tony



ABOUT ME

I've been writing stories ever since I was 14. I only wrote for my close friends, though. It took me ages to go public. And here I am at last!

I wrote this story in 2010 on my cell phone in the form of text messages. There were 360 of them and it took me about a week.

I always wrote on the train, on the way to and from work. I was observing people, I would hear something here and there, and that was my inspiration.

Therefore, you could say that the story is based on reality.

Even though it's about many different people who don't even know each other and have nothing in common, except that they weren't discreet enough, which opened their way into my story.

Název povídky vychází ze rčení “Chytrému napověz, hloupého trkni”. Ekvivalent se v angličtině nepoužívá tak často, jako česky, ale přesto existuje:

A NOD TO THE WISE (rod to otherwise).

Protože mně nejde jen o překlad, ale hlavně o to, aby to, co čteš, dávalo smysl!

Katka Havlová



Thanks for reading my story!

I hope you enjoyed reading it as much as I enjoyed writing it for you.
I wrote this story also in Czech, so you can use it as a cross-check reference
for understanding.

With love ❤️

Kateřina Horlová

© 2026 Katka Havlová