

Novellen "Mum" - Øvelse i verbets tider

Følgende tekst står i præteritum / pluskvamperfektum (datid / førdatid)

Lav teksten om til **præsens / perfektum** (nutid / førnutid):

Nel was a young and newly married girl of 20. She had married Ted 6 months before, and they had moved into two rooms on the top floor of Ted's parents' house in the North of England. Nel was economic and she managed quite well on Ted's wages. They were very happy with each other, but Ted's mother, Mum, was a problem. She had ignored Nel right from the start.

Mum was never satisfied with Nel. Often when Nel was cooking for Ted and Mum was prowling about, Mum said that Ted didn't like that kind of food. Nel had sewn lovely yellow curtains for the sitting room, and Mum said that they were not right, and when Nel had bought oranges as a special treat, Mum said that they were a waste of money. When Nel had knitted woollen socks for Ted as a surprise, Mum said that Ted wouldn't like them. The colour wasn't right. Of course she also had a disheartening remark when she discovered that Nel had bought a lottery ticket in a charity lottery. Nel felt angry with Mum, and she wanted Ted to take her side and stand up for her, but she couldn't make him. He was evasive when she complained.

Ted's father was a self-employed carpenter with a workshop in the back yard. He was a bad-tempered man, and from her rooms she could hear how he scolded the apprentices.

Nel didn't have much to do with Father as they called him. No, Mum was her problem.

Things became really bad when Ted lost his job at the works and they had to live on Ted's parents. They had to eat downstairs, and Nel felt they were being treated like children.

A short moment of joy came when they found out they had won £100 in the lottery. It was a lot of money, and it would mean better conditions for them for a long time. Ted, however, said they would have to give the money to his father. She thought it was most unfair, but Ted comforted her and said that he was sure he would soon get a job.

A few days later when Ted was to collect the prize, he came home very late. He said he had lost the money and asked Nel to say that *she* had lost it. He was afraid of Father and that Mum would be dragged into it as well if he heard Ted had lost the ticket. But Father would not harm Nel, he said.

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The parents had to be told about the loss, and Nel made up a story about how she had lost the money. Everybody in the family was extremely upset and tense. Ted went out a lot in the days that followed, and she was on her own. She thought of her miserable situation and how she was never going to be happy ever again in that house. But it finally dawned on her that nobody could help her but herself.

After dinner the following evening she went down to Mum who was working in the kitchen. Nel did not say much, but when Mum made a critical remark about her, she could stand it no longer and burst out with everything that was on her mind. She told her the truth, that it was Ted who had lost the money and not her. She got all her anger out on Mum, how sick and tired she was of her harshness and criticism and ended in loud sobbing. Mum did not say anything. She turned her back on Nel and went on with her work.

Just then Father came in. He banged the door against the wall and shouted, "What's that I hear at the pub?" ... Nobody's going to say I can't control my own household... I won't be laughed at, d'y' hear? They say you didn't lose the money as you told..." He grabbed hold of Nel's arm and would have beaten her, had Mum not interfered. Mum told him to stop, Nel was a grown woman, she said. Without stopping, Father turned to her and gave her the blow he had intended for Nel. He hit Mum in the face several times. Nel was all confused. She was shocked, but she pulled herself together. She got very angry. She would not allow that. She managed to get him away from Mum and she pushed him violently against the cupboard. Some crockery fell noisily to the floor. The crashes seemed to wake him, and he left when Nel screamed, "Get out, get out, you..."

Mum was very upset. Nel could see her red cheeks, but she only asked Nel to pick up the broken things from the floor. She was about to continue her work, but Nel made her sit down beside her for a cup of tea. The tea seemed to warm her up. Something melted in her. She sought Nel's eyes and hesitantly she said, "I'm too old to be beaten... he ought not to have done it... it's several years since he last did it... I'm ashamed for him... he ought not to have done it in front of you... You are one of the family now... he went for you... but you will manage better with that temper of yours."

And now YOU finish the story...!