

Stories for Lipreading



A PERFECT DAY by Peter Dean.

[This text is read aloud at the beginning of this video:]

Welcome to Stories for Lipreading. If you haven't used our website before, we suggest you look at our 'How to Use' page before you begin. We hope you enjoy this story, which is called 'A Perfect Day' by Peter Dean. It has been filmed in two episodes. Here is Episode 1.

A Perfect Day by Peter Dean. Episode One.

"Come quickly, Mummy! *'Strictly Come Dancing's* on!"

Alison rushed into the lounge and plonked herself on the sofa. She poured herself a glass of white wine. Little Bella snuggled beside her. It was a perfect girls' night in, just Bella, Mummy and *'Strictly'*.

Jeffrey had gone to the pub. He would be back later, smelling of beer and pickles. She dreaded him coming home sometimes. Sometimes he was not the person she had married, argumentative and awkward. He had threatened to leave her and Bella for the Middle East – to earn a pot of money, he said. Sometimes she thought that seemed more like a promise than a threat.

When *'Strictly'* ended, Alison put Bella to bed. Alison tucked her in and kissed her forehead. "Sleep tight," she said softly. "Sweet dreams"

At ten o'clock, Jeffrey came home. He was buzzing with excitement, talking nineteen to the dozen about his pal, Mike.

"Mike has got a season ticket for Spurs. He wants me to use it when he can't make a home game. Maybe we could both go to London and meet up after the game's finished. Make a day of it?"

Alison nodded. She loathed football but liked the idea of a trip to London. She could get some 'retail therapy' with Bella while the match was on.

Two weeks later, Jeffrey announced that he had the Spurs season ticket to use this coming Saturday. They were going to stay over for the night, make it a special weekend. They caught a morning train and checked into their hotel before lunch. Jeffrey gave Alison £100 to spend. He had never been so generous. She smiled and he hugged her tightly.

Then he reminded her where to meet up after the football match and disappeared, with his new scarf around his neck. Alison and Bella joined the crowds and headed for the shops.

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Later, Alison was waiting with Bella near Hyde Park Corner. They had arranged to meet Jeffrey there, and then, with a tap on her shoulder, there he was.

“Spurs won!” he said excitedly.

He lifted Bella up and swung her around.

“Wheeee!”

“Let’s get some dinner,” Alison suggested as she picked up a Hamley’s bag bursting with toys and games. “I spotted a McDonald’s earlier.”

Bella jumped up and down with excitement as they went inside. Just before they had finished eating, Jeffrey reached in to his pocket and brought out three tickets.

“Look what I’ve got!” he smiled.

“What?” said Alison, eating her last chip.

“Just three tickets to *Strictly Come Dancing*, that’s what!”

“No!” Alison exclaimed in disbelief.

Bella stamped her feet and clapped her hands in excitement.

Alison felt tears well up in her eyes.

“Thank you so much,” she said.

[A Perfect Day by Peter Dean. Episode Two.](#)

It was glorious: orchestral music, coloured lights and beautiful dancers in fabulous costumes. It was a fantastic and romantic evening.

Later they took a cab back to the hotel, where Alison sank exhausted onto the bed. Bella curled up on her bed and fell asleep immediately.

“Let’s have a night-cap,” Jeffrey said, examining the contents of the mini-bar. “It’s been a good day, yeah?”

“Really good, yes,” she smiled.

Bella was snoring gently. Alison covered her with the duvet, leaving her to sleep in her clothes. She took a sip from her glass and reached out a hand to take Jeffrey’s. He pulled her closer.

The next morning, on the train, Alison sighed contentedly.

“Yesterday was such a lovely day,” she said.

“A perfect day,” Jeffrey replied.

Bella chirped in: “A perfect day, Daddy.”

Jeffrey put his arm around Alison’s shoulders and she laid her head on his chest.

“I love you, Ali,” he whispered.

“I love you too, my little angel,” he added hurriedly, as Bella peered out at him across the table that separated them.

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“This is what I dreamed of when we got married, Ali. You, me, a family. Five years it’s taken us to get to this, but it’s worth it, eh, Ali? You are my best friend! You do still love me, don’t you?” he asked nervously.

Alison sat up and looked at him.

“There have been times when I’ve wondered, Jeff. You can be a real pain to live with...you know that... but lately, things have been so much better. You know Bella is my life...”

She grabbed his hand.

“And we’re all stronger together than apart. Will you remember that?”

She paused again thinking of things he’d said in the past. “You’re not going to take a job in Saudi, are you, Jeff?”

“It’d be a hundred thousand a year, Ali. Tax-free! I’m getting older; I may not get another chance,” he said, quietly, weighing his words.

He looked away, towards Bella and then back to Alison’s questioning gaze.

“But if you want me, I want our perfect day to go on and on. I really do, Ali.”

Putting his arm around her shoulders again they kissed; Bella put her hands over her eyes as the train pulled into their station.

“Yuk, Mummy kissing,” she frowned.

Bella skipped along the platform as Jeffrey and Alison followed holding hands. Like the dancers in *Strictly Come Dancing*, the family had a new spring in its step.

“I’m staying put - with you and Bella,” Jeffrey smiled. “That’s all I want.”

“Me too,” Alison replied. “Stronger together, remember? And,” she added, smiling as Bella looked up at them, “you never know: you might even want to watch ‘*Strictly*’ with us on Saturday...”