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They say that blood is thicker than water, that our relatives are more important to us than others. Everyone was so kind to the old lady on her birthday.

Surely her daughter would make an even bigger effort to please

he?The PresentIt was the old ladys birthday.She got up early to be

ready for the post. From the second floor flat she could see the postman when he came down the street, and the little boy from the

ground floor brought up her letters on the rare occasions when

anything came.Today she was sure the would be something. Myra

wouldnt forget her mothers birthday, even if she seldom wrote at

other times. Of course Myra was busy. Her husband had been made Mayor, and Myra herself had got a medal for her work the aged.The

old lady was proud of Myra, but Enid was the daughter she loved.

Enid had never married, but had seemed content to live with her mother, and teach in a primary school round the corner.One

evening, however, Enid said, "Ive arranged for Mrs. Morrison to look after you for a few days, Mother. Tomorrow I have to go into hospital--just a minor operation, Ill soon be home."In the morning she went, but never came back--she died on the operating table.

Myra came to the funeral, and in her efficient way arranged for Mrs. Morrison to come in and light the fire and give the old lady her

breakfast.Two years ago that was, and since then Myra had been to see her mother three times, but her husband never.The old lady was

eight today. She had put on her best dress. Perhaps--perhaps Myra might come. After all, eighty was a special birthday, another decade lined or endured just as you chose to look at it. Even if Myra did not come, she would send a present. The old lady was sure of that. Two spots of colour brightened her cheeks. She was excited--like a child. She would enjoy her day. Yesterday Mrs. Morrison had given the flat an extra clean, and today she had brought a card and a bunch of marigolds when she came to do the breakfast. Mrs. Grant downstairs had made a cake, and in the afternoon she was going down there to tea. The little boy, Johnnie, had been up with a packet of mints, and said he wouldnt go out to play until the post had come. "I guess youll get lots and lots of presents," he said, "I did last were when I was six." "What would she like? A pair of slippers perhaps. Or a new cardigan. A cardigan would be lovely. Blues such a pretty colour. Jim had always liked her in blue. Or a table lamp. Or a book, a travel book, with pictures, or a little clock, with clear black numbers. So many lovely things. She stood by the window, watching. The postman turned round the corner on his bicycle. Her heart beat fast. Johnnie had seen him too and ran to the gate. Then clatter, clatter up the stairs. Johnnie knocked at her door. "Granny, granny," he shouted, "Ive got your post." He gave her four envelopes. Three were unsealed cards from old friends. The fourth was sealed, in Myras writing. The old lady felt a pang of disappointment. "No parcel, Johnnie?" "No, granny." "Maybe the parcel was too large to come by letter post. That was it. It would come later by parcel post. She must be patient. Almost reluctantly she tore the envelope open. Folded in

the card was a piece of paper. Written on the card was a message under the printed Happy Birthday -- Buy yourself something nice with the cheque, Myra and Harold. The cheque fluttered to the floor like a bird with a broken wing. Slowly the old lady stooped to pick it up. Her present, her lovely present. With trembling fingers she tore it into little bits.

NEW WORDS

relative n. 亲属, 亲戚
present n. gift 礼物, 赠品
postman n. 邮递员
rare a. not happening often 罕见的; 不常发生的
occasion n. special time. time when sth. happens 时刻, 时机; 场合
mayor n. chief official of a city or town 市长
medal n. 奖章
aged a. old
content a. satisfied. pleased 满意的; 高兴的
primary a. first. earliest 首要的; 最初的
arrange vi. make preparations. plan 作安排, 筹划
minor a. not serious or important 较小的; 次要的
operate vi. cut the body in order to set right or remove a diseased part 开刀, 动手术
operating table n. a special table in a hospital, where operations are done 手术台
funeral n. 葬礼
efficient a. able to plan and work well 效率高的
decade n. ten years
endure vt. bear (pain, suffering, etc.) 忍受, 忍耐
spot n. a round area that is different from the main surface 点, 斑点
brighten vt. make bright or brighter 使发光; 使发亮
cheek n. either side of the face below the eye 面颊
extra a. additional 额加的, 外加的
clean n. cleaning
bunch n. things of the same kind that are tied together (一)束, (一)串
marigold n. 万寿菊 (花)
packet n. small parcel box 小包 (裹)
mint n. 薄荷糖
slipper n. 拖鞋
cardigan n. (羊毛)开衫
clatter n. a number of rapid short knocking sounds 咔嗒声
granny n. (colloq. for) grandmother
envelope n. a paper cover for a letter 信封
unsealed a. 未密封的
seal vt. sealed a. 密封的
writing

n. handwriting 书法 ; 笔迹 pang n. sudden, sharp pain 剧痛
disappointment n. sadness because one does not get what one hopes for 失望
disappoint vt. parcel n. 包裹 reluctantly ad. unwillingly 不情愿地 , 勉强地
reluctant a. fold vt. bend into two or more parts 折叠
cheque n. 支票 flutter vt. move quickly to and fro in the air 飘动
stoop vi. bend the body forwards and downwards 弯腰
tremble vi. shake uncontrollably with quick short movements 颤抖
PHRASES & EXPRESSIONS at other times on other occasions 在别的时候 ; 平时
round / around the corner very near in distance or time 在附近 ; 即将来临
after all in spite of everything. it must be remembered 毕竟 ; 终究
be sure of 对...有把握 , 确信 pick up take hold of and lift up from a surface 拿起 , 捡起
PROPER NAMES Myra 迈拉 (女子名) Enid 伊妮德 (女子名) Morrison 莫里森 (姓氏) Grant 格兰特 (姓氏及男子名)
Johnnie 约翰尼 (John的昵称) Jim 吉姆 (James的昵称) Harold 100Test 下载频道开通 , 各类考试题目直接下载。详细请访问 www.100test.com