

FORNICATION¹

Helena fell in love with Milan over a year ago, but for a long time she found it difficult to deceive Richard. For one thing he worked at the same company as she did and thus could keep an eye on her twenty-four hours a day. Finally she came up with a plan: twice a month right after work she and Richard would escape together to the city center. She'd call up Aneta a few days ahead of time, who would purchase a few pieces of clothing for her and hide them in her shop. Aneta had been married only five years, but nevertheless took a lighthearted or rather a more understanding view of marital infidelity² than Helena.

Before leaving the office this afternoon she scurried³ into the washroom, brushed her hair and applied lipstick. She didn't feel like waiting for the elevator so she took the stairs down the three floors. She felt young, at least younger

1. fornication, n.: voluntary sexual intercourse between two unmarried persons or two persons not married to each other. (SMIL-STVO)

2. infidelity, n.: (an act of) having sex with someone who is not your husband, wife or regular sexual partner, or (an example of) not

SMILSTVO

Do Milana se Helena zamilovala už před více než rokem, ale podvést Richarda nebylo dlouho lehké – mimo jiné pracoval v téže firmě jako ona, takže ji měl na očích čtyřadvacet hodin denně. Nakonec to vymyslela takhle: dvakrát měsíčně se s Richardem uvolnili z práce hned po obědě a společně odjeli do nákupního centra. Pár dní předtím pokaždé zavolala Anetě, která jí tu koupila pár kousků oblečení a uschovala je u sebe v prodejně. Aneta byla vdaná teprve pět let, nicméně k otázce manželské nevěry se stavěla lehkomyšlněji, ba chápavěji než sama Helena.

Před odchodem z kanceláře i dnes zašla na toalety. Učesala se a přemalovala si pusy. Nechtělo se jí čekat na výtah, a tak ona tři patra seběhla po schodech. Připadala si mladá, přinej-

being loyal or faithful; *marital/sexual infidelity*. (NEVĚRA, CIZOLOŽSTVÍ)

3. scurry, v.: to move quickly, with small short steps. *The mouse scurried across the floor*. (CUPITAT, DUPKAT)

than at other times. It had rained in the morning, and you could still feel the dampness¹ in the warm air. She inhaled deeply. She couldn't stand the air conditioning in the office. Richard's new Audi was waiting for her. Our cars are our children, thought Helena. Until now she'd never dared² ask her husband for more than an hour and a half but today, God knows why, she decided to gamble³.

“*Two* hours?! Forget it.”

His voice rose imperceptibly⁴, and he lifted his eyebrows, but Helena knew his disagreement was merely feigned⁵. He was clearly in good spirits. He'd give in. If you subtract ten minutes times two for the trip to Milan's studio and back, they'd have an hour and a half even with the crucial reserve time. For once they wouldn't have to hurry. The image of a leisurely tempo excited Helena. She gently touched her bedaubed lips to her husband's cheek. Had they transferred to the back seat beneath the darken-

1. dampness, n.: wetness, especially in a way that is not pleasant or comfortable. *It's the dampness in the air that is bad for your lungs.* (VLHKOST, VLHKO)

2. dare, v.: to be brave enough to do something difficult or dangerous. *Dare you tell him the news?* (TROUFNOUT SI, DOVOLIT SI)

3. gamble, v.: to do something risky that might result in loss of money or failure, hoping to get money or achieve success. *Anyone*

menším mladší než jindy. Dopoledne přelo, teplý vzduch byl stále cítit vodou. Zhluboka se nadechla. Klimatizaci ve firmě nesnášela. Richardovo nové audi už na ni čekalo. Auta, naše děti, pomyslela si Helena. Až dosud se nikdy neodvážila chtít po manželovi víc než hodinu a půl, ale dneska se bůhvíproč rozhodla, že to riskne.

„Dvě hodiny?! Na to zapomeň.“

Zvýšil nepatrně hlas a zdvihl obočí, ale Helena poznala, že nesouhlas pouze předstírá. Očividně byl v dobré náladě. Povolí jí to. Když odečte dvakrát deset minut na cestu do Milanova ateliéru, budou mít i s nezbytnou rezervou půldruhé hodiny. Poprvé nebudou muset spěchat. Představa pomalého tempa Helenu vzrušila. Namalovanými rty se zlehka dotkla manželovy tváře. Kdyby se teď přesunuli na zadní sedačky

who gambles on the stock exchange has to be prepared to lose money. (RISKOVAT, DÁVAT V SÁZKU)

4. imperceptibly, adv.: unnoticedly because of being very slight. *Gradually, almost imperceptibly, her condition had worsened.* (NEZNATELNĚ)

5. feign, v.: to pretend to feel something, usually an emotion. *She responded to his remarks with feigned amusement.* (PŘEDSTÍRAT, MARKÝROVAT)

ed side windows, perhaps she wouldn't have been opposed, but Richard was too conservative for such things. She'd already resigned herself to the fact that their erotic activity would take place exclusively in bed.

"You'll buy a couple extra magazines," she whispered to him.

"An hour and a half. My final word."

"And two scotches..."

He hesitated¹.

"And who'll drive back?"

"Me."

She observed him with a smile. Richard decided to play along and cocked his head to the side as if actually taking it into consideration².

"I'd also like to stop by the hairdresser's," she explained.

This was the easiest way. Like most men Richard could recognize significantly shorter hair or a change of color, but definitely not trimmed split ends, not to mention a revitalization treat-

1. hesitate, v.: to pause before you do or say something, often because you are uncertain or nervous about it. *She hesitated slightly before answering the inspector's question.* (VÁHAT, ZDRÁHAT SE)

pod ta zatmavená boční skla, možná by nebyla proti – ale na podobné věci byl Richard příliš konzervativní. Už se smířila s tím, že jejich erotické aktivity se odehrávají výhradně v posteli.

„Koupíš si o dva časopisy víc,“ pošeptala mu.

„Hodina a půl. Moje poslední slovo.“

„A o dvě skotské...“

Zarazil se.

„A kdo to odřídí zpátky?“

„Já.“

S úsměvem ho pozorovala. Richard přistoupil na hru. Naklonil hlavu na stranu, jako by to skutečně zvažoval.

„Chci si taky skočit k holiči,“ vysvětlila mu.

Takhle to bylo nejjednodušší. Richard jako většina mužů dokázal poznat ještě tak výrazné zkrácení vlasů nebo změnu barvy, ale rozhodně ne zastřižené konečky, natož pak revitalizační

2. consideration, n.: when you think about something carefully. *The whole matter needs careful consideration.* (PROMYŠLENÍ, ZVÁŽENÍ)

ment. He heaved a sigh, started the car and took off. In the corner of the parking lot¹ stood a yellowish gray puddle² of water, and at the last minute Richard swerved³.

“You’re watching out for puddles?” she noted amused. “Tell me it’s not true...”

He assumed a contrite⁴ demeanor⁵ and they both burst out laughing. Helena was feeling sorry for this wonderful fellow as she had so many times before. In the end it was nothing more than fornication. When she told her friend Aneta how she felt, the latter made fun of her.

“Fornication? Two hours of happiness a month?” Helena didn’t know what to say.

“Twenty-four crummy⁶ hours a year?” continued Aneta. “The only day you’re ever genuinely happy? Do you really think you’re asking too much from life?”

In the crowded underground parking lot she pretended she was helping Richard look for a free spot but was actually looking around to see if Milan’s car was anywhere nearby. Multi-

1. parking lot, n.: an area of ground for parking cars. (PARKOVACÍ MÍSTO)

2. puddle, n.: a small pool of liquid on the ground, especially from rain. (LOUŽE, KALUŽ)

3. swerve, v.: to change direction, especially suddenly. *The bus driver swerved to avoid hitting the cyclists.* (ZATOČIT, ZAHNOUT)

kúru. Vzdychl, nastartoval a rozjel se. V rohu parkoviště stála žlutohnědá voda. Na poslední chvíli strhl volant.

„Vyhýbáš se loužím?“ poznamenala pobaveně. „To snad není pravda...“

Zatvářil se provinile – a oba se rozesmáli. Heleně jako už tolikrát přišlo líto, že toho skvělého chlapa podvádí. Koneckonců to nebylo nic jiného než smilstvo. Když se ovšem s podobnými pocity svěřila Anetě, kamarádka se jí vysmála.

„Smilstvo? Dvě hodiny štěstí měsíčně?“

Helena vypadala bezradně.

„Blbejch čtyřiadvacet hodin ročně?“ pokračovala Aneta. „Jeden jedinej opravdu šťastnej den? Myslíš, že toho chceš od života přlíš?“

V zaplněném podzemním parkovišti Richardovi naoko pomáhala pátrat po volném místě, ale ve skutečnosti se především rozhlížela, zda náhodou neuvidí Milanovo auto. Na odřeném

4. contrite, adj.: feeling very sorry and guilty for something bad that you have done; *a contrite expression*. (ZKROUŠENÝ, KAJÍCŇÝ)

5. demeanor, n.: a way of looking and behaving. *She has the demeanor of a woman who is contented with her life*. (CHOVÁNÍ, ZPŮSOBY)

6. crummy, adj.: of very bad quality; *a crummy car*. (MIZERNÝ, VŠIVÝ)

colored spots of paint adorned¹ the scuffed² pillar they were just skirting. Then in the next row she caught sight of the automobile she knew so intimately – this caught her off guard. Until now they'd always had to contact each other via cell phone. A flutter³ of fear and exhilaration passed across her abdomen⁴. She repeated to herself the number and letter of the nearest column. Milan's face was hidden behind the sunshade. She wondered if this wasn't all too obvious but Richard's attention was fortunately directed to the parking lot's video screen. He shut off the engine and with adolescent satisfaction scrutinized⁵ the distance from the two neighboring cars. She noticed a movement behind the windshield of Milan's car and realized that right now barely ten meters separated the two men. Against her will she giggled somewhat hysterically.

“What is it?” asked Richard good-naturedly.
“What's so funny?”

“You, you diligent driver.”

1. adorn, v.: to add something decorative to a person or thing. *The bride's hair was adorned with pearls and white flowers.* (OZDOBIT)

2. scuffed, adj.: having a rough mark on a smooth surface, especially on a shoe or floor. *The book's a bit scuffed along the spine, but it was the only copy left in the shop.* (OŠOUPANÝ)

3. flutter, n.: a short period of excited activity. *His speech caused a flutter of excitement.* (ZÁCHVĚV, CHVĚNÍ)

pilíři, kolem něhož právě v těsné blízkosti zatáčeli, byly různobarevné stopy laku. V příští řadě důvěrně známý vůz spatřila. Zaskočilo ji to, dosud se pokaždé museli svolávat mobilem. Břichem jí projela vlna strachu a vzrušení. V duchu si zopakovala písmeno a číslo z nejbližšího sloupu. Milanův obličej nezahlédla, měl sklopenou sluneční clonu. Přemítala, jestli to není nápadné, ale veškerá Richardova pozornost našťestí patřila obrazovce parkovací kamery. Vypnul motor a s klukovským uspokojením zkontroloval minimální vzdálenost od obou sousedních vozů. Za předním sklem Milanova auta zaznamenala pohyb. Uvědomila si, že oba muže v dané chvíli dělí sotva deset metrů – a proti své vůli se poněkud hystericky uchechtla.

„Co je?“ zeptal se Richard přátelsky. „Čemu se směješ?“

„Tobě, ty motoristo.“

4. abdomen, n.: the lower part of a person's or animal's body, which contains the stomach, bowels and other organs. (BŘICHO, BŘIŠNÍ DUTINA)

5. scrutinize, v.: to examine something very carefully in order to discover information. *He scrutinized the men's faces closely, trying to work out who was lying.* (ZKOUMAT, PROHLÍŽET)

With two fingers he lightly grasped her neck, ran his hand down her back and clasped the left half of her buttocks¹ so firmly she let out a loud squeal². She noticed the tips of her suede pumps were a bit wet. She turned her back to Milan and adjusted her skirt. Her calves³ were tense. Richard exited the car, and the automatic lock peeped. He looked at his watch.

“Back here at 4:15. Exactly two hours.”

“Fantastic! You’re too kind, I mean it.”

“Not a minute longer.”

They parted in front of a shoe store. Richard purchased two newspapers and the latest issue of *Off Road* magazine. He leisurely continued down the corridor in the direction of his favorite café. He made his way past the various display windows without interest, but when he came to the glass walls of the Children’s Nook he halted and observed a three-year-old girl and an even younger boy, clearly her brother, repeatedly descend on a small toboggan into a flood of

1. buttock, n.: either side of a person’s bottom. (HÝŽDĚ)

2. squeal, n.: a long very high sound or cry. *The train ground to a halt with a squeal of brakes.* (KŇUČET, JEČET)

Dvěma prsty jí lehce zmáčkl krk, sjel rukou dolů a dlaní jí sevřel levou pŕlku zadku tak silnĕ, aŷ vyjekla. Všimla si, ŷe ŷpičky semišovŷch lodiček mŷ trochu mokrĕ. Otočila se zŷdy k Milanovi a upravila si sukni. Ve stehnech cítila napĕtí. Richard odstoupil od auta, automatický zŷmek krŷtce pípl. Podíval se na hodinky.

„Ve ŷtyři patnŷcet tady. Rovnŷ dvě hodiny.“

„Úŷasnŷ! Hodnej! Vŷŷnĕ.“

„Ani o minutu dŷl.“

Před prodejnou obuvi se definitivnĕ rozloučili. Richard si koupil dvoje noviny a novĕ číslo ŷasopisu OFF ROAD a pomalu pokračoval ŷirokou chodbou dŷl, smĕrem ke svĕ oblíbenĕ kavŷrnĕ. Vŷlohy obchodŷ míjel bez zŷjmu, ale u prosklenĕ stĕny dĕtského koutku se zastavil a pozoroval asi tŷíletou holčičku s jeŷtĕ menŷím chlapcem, patrnĕ bratrem, kteří malŷm tobogŷnĕm opakovanĕ sjíždĕli do záplavy barevnŷch

3. calf, pl. calves, n.: the thick curved part at the back of the human leg between the knee and the foot. *She's been unable to play since January because of a torn calf muscle.* (LŷTKO)

colored balls. When one of the mothers saw him staring he left.

In the café he took a seat facing the window to observe the passers-by¹. The young red-headed waitress seemed familiar. He ordered a coffee, mineral water and a double whisky. He had lots of time. He couldn't spend more than fifteen minutes in that small office behind the shop anyway, and as it was, the other salesgirls always giggled when he walked in. To Aneta, those fifteen minutes seemed too few, but for him it was more than enough. Perhaps he should bring her a small gift. Perfume? Flowers? He could buy flowers for Helena, too, he mused². He immersed³ himself in his newspaper. Presently the waitress interrupted him with his order.

“Is your wife shopping?”

He realized she was a good twenty years younger than him. He found her irony rather pleasing and realized that this combination of generational disregard and lukewarm⁴ interest had reached its tipping point. It would only get worse.

1. passer-by, n.: someone who is going past a particular place. *A passer-by saw smoke and called the fire department.* (KOLEM-JDOUCÍ)

2. muse, v.: to think about something carefully and for a long time. *At breakfast, he allowed himself to muse about his presidency.* (ROZJÍMAT, DUMAT)

míčků; když zachytil pohled jedné z matek, odešel.

V kavárně se posadil tak, aby i on mohl pozorovat kolemjdoucí. Zdálo se, že ho mladičká zrzavá servírka poznává. Objednal si kávu, minerálku a dvojitou whisky. Má spoustu času. V té maličké kanceláři za prodejnou stejně nemohou strávit víc jak patnáct minut – už takhle se ostatní prodavačky při jeho příchodu po každé pohihňávají. Anetě ta čtvrt hodinka samozřejmě připadá málo, ale jemu patnáct minut každopádně stačí. Možná by jí dneska mohl přinést malý dárek, napadlo ho. Parfém? Kytku? Kytku by potom mohl koupit i Heleně, uvažoval. Začel se do novin. Po chvíli ho vyrušila servírka, přinášející objednávku.

„Manželka nakupuje?“

Uvědomil si, že je o dobrých dvacet let mladší. Její ironie ho spíše potěšila. Věděl, že tahle kombinace generačního pohrdání a vlažného zájmu je jeho maximum. A bude huř.

3. immerse, v.: to involve someone completely in an activity. *She immersed herself wholly in her work.* (PONORIT SE)

4. lukewarm, adj.: only slightly warm. *How can you drink lukewarm coffee?* (VLAŽNÝ)

“No, she’s *pretending* to shop but is really with her lover.”

“You’re kidding!”

“Nope¹. He’s always waiting for her down in the parking garage.”

“You must be a tolerant husband,” she smiled.

“*Resigned* would be more appropriate.”

“Are you serious?” the redhead asked after a moment.

“Indeed I am.”

“You’re telling me this is for real?”

He nodded. She could see he wasn’t lying.

“I... don’t know what to say.”

“I didn’t mean to make you uncomfortable.”

The waitress looked around at the other guests for support.

“Christ...”

Richard shrugged² his shoulders.

“And you sit here reading car magazines?” she suddenly blurted out. “That’s perverse! I’m sorry,” she added quickly.

1. nope, adv.: (spoken) no. “*Cigarette?*” “*Nope.*” (NE, ANI NÁ-HODOU)

„Ne. *Předstírá*, že nakupuje, ale ve skutečnosti je s milencem.“

„Neříkejte!“

„Už je to tak. Vždycky na ni čeká v autě dole na parkovišti.“

„Tak to jste tolerantní manžel,“ usmála se.

„*Rezignovaný* by bylo přesnější.“

„Mluvíte vážně?“ zeptala se zrzka po chvíli.

„Ano.“

„Chcete říct, že... je to pravda?“

Přikývl. Z jeho pohledu vyčetla, že nelže.

„Já... nevím, co na to říct.“

„Nechtěl jsem vás uvést do rozpaků.“

Servírka se krátce rozhlédla po ostatních hostech, jako by je chtěla žádat o podporu.

„Ježší...“

Richard pokrčil rameny.

„A to si tady čtete automagazíny?“ vybuchla náhle. „To je úchylný! Nezlobte se,“ dodala spěšně.

2. shrug, v.: you raise your shoulders to express that you do not know or are not sure about something. *He just shrugged of his shoulders as an answer.* (PO/KRČIT rameny)

“Perverse?” said Richard. “Two hours of happiness a month? Twenty-four hours a year? The only genuinely¹ happy day of the year? That really seems a lot² to you?”

The waitress said nothing.

1. genuine, adj.: not false; *genuine Windows*. (RYZÍ, PRAVÝ)
Genuinely, adv.: sincerely. (OPRAVDU, VÁŽNĚ)

„Úchylný?“ řekl Richard. „Dvě hodiny štěstí měsíčně? Čtyřicet hodin za rok? Jedinej opravdu šťastnej den ročně – vážně vám to připadá moc?“

Servírka mlčela.

2. to seem a lot, prh.: be looking like. *He seems a lot like Mick Jagger.* (VYPADAT hodně JAKO)