

Bourne
toWrite...
creative writing
workshops

Henry

by Penny Humphrey

I feel guilty, God knows, about all sorts of things but not about finally getting the courage to pack my bags and leave you without so much as a backward glance at the misery I have endured over the last forty years of living under your roof.

On the contrary it is the best thing I have ever done. My only feelings for you now are utter contempt, you wormed your way into my life and then took me over lock stock and smoking barrel. I fell for it all, I even thought I had fallen for you. I actually would have died for you once.

It is with the greatest pleasure that I say I am no longer your property to manipulate and control, I have re-discovered myself, no longer your shadow but an entity all of my own and I intend to live every day of whatever time I may have left.

I was going to say all this to your face when you returned from your latest 'business' trip. Although I have long known that your version of 'business' may not be quite what you expected me to think. But in the end I decided that a letter can say it all better than I can say out loud, I doubt you would have let me talk without talking me down anyway.

Oh how guilty you have made me feel over the years for not matching up to your chauvinistic expectations, for not taking enough trouble with meals, with my clothes, with my lack of academia. For my shyness letting you down when you brought business colleagues home and I did not perform to the standards expected of me.

So many nights I cried myself to sleep when you told me how disappointed you were in me before passing out from another wine soaked evening and breathing stertorously into my ear.

You never once looked at the real me. But I have no sense of guilt now, just triumph, pure triumph, plus a sense of why did I wait so long?

So now dear Henry perhaps you can find yourself another fool to look after you and good luck to her

Charlotte

PS There is a shepherds pie in the oven for you and I have changed the bed sheets.