

# Contents of a dead mans packets

[Life](#), [Death](#)



In the story "Contents of a Dead Man's Pocket" written by Jack Finney, the main character named Tom goes through a near death experience causing him to realize that ambitions are not all that life is about, that his job is not more important than his wife, and that he is missing out on life because of his ambitions. The conflict in this story is a man versus self because Tom's ambition clouded his judgement into believing that his job was more important than his life, so important that he risked his life for it. Additionally, a conflict that comes up is how the husband spends too much time on his work, he is focused too much on his job that he ignores his life. This takes away time with wife, Clare, who goes out alone often because Tom claims he has to work. Clare says, "You work too much, though, Tom, and too hard." But Tom thinks to himself "it was not actually true that he had to work tonight, though he very much wanted to... this was his own project... and it could be postponed." This shows that he thinks more about his job than anything else, it's his main ambition which gives him time for anything else. He is missing out on life and time with his wife while he can still spend time with her. After his near death experience of almost falling from an apartment twenty stories high, he realizes this and goes out to meet her at the movie. Also, he cannot get back inside of his apartment after climbing out the window from his 20th floor apartment for the slip of paper that flew out the window that had all his observations and notes for a new grocery store display method because the window closed down on him and he also cannot reach the slip of paper he went after. He is able to get the slip of paper right before he is about to fall but regains his balance. As he slowly makes his way back along the ledge of the building towards the window, the window shuts

closed on him when he reaches it. As he stands out in the cold he begins to think and realize things. “ He thought of all the evenings he had spent away from her, working, and he regretted them. He thought wonderingly of his fierce ambition and of the direction his life had taken; he thought of the hours he'd spent by himself, filling the yellow sheet that had brought him out here. Contents of the dead man's pockets, he thought with sudden fierce anger, a wasted life. " Furthermore, he now understood that he wasted all that time on his work while really accomplishing nothing. He had wasted precious moments that he could have spent with his wife that now he would not have a chance to do, it was too late. There would be nothing to remember him by, no accomplishments, no memories. After finally being able to get back into his apartment by breaking the window he knows what he has been missing out on, his thoughts are not clouded by his need to work anymore. He understands that life was not meant to be spent working to have a life, it was meant to be with ones you love. When he gets back into his apartment he proves that he is a changed man by going out to catch up with his wife to see the movie. And the fact that he laughs and ignores the paper flew back out the window when he opened the door to leave that he had just retrieved from outside is proof that his job is not his main thought anymore. Tom's near death experience helped him to understand that work is not more important than his life, that he should make the most of of life because if he does not he will die one day and leave nothing behind. There will be nothing for his wife, no money and no memories, the world will forget him, he will have nothing to show for himself. He realizes that his wife is important, that he has forgotten about having a life, and that he he has been

wasting it by working for nothing. He works too much and yet there is nothing to show for it. In the end he changes his ways and goes out to live his life, to enjoy life, and spend time with his wife while he can.