

# The kiss of death



**ASSIGN  
BUSTER**

It began with the porch steps. Or maybe it began with the laziness of the man living in the house to which these steps led. Either way both are very important for this story.

The Higgs couple lived in a small house in a quiet neighbourhood by the road. It may have seemed at first sight that Mr. And Mrs. Higgs got on well as a couple. However the truth was very different. Mr. Higgs was a jealous man. Mrs. Higgs was a hospital nurse and often had to work over night. This meant the two of them never got to see much of each other. Mrs. Higgs came home in the morning at about the time when Mr. Higgs left for work. It was the same in the evenings, Mrs Higgs leaving the house for work only to meet her husband coming in. Not knowing for sure where his wife was over night Mr. Higgs often got very suspicious of his wife having an affair.

It was a Tuesday morning Mr. Higgs, alone in the house, looking out the window at the snowed-in drive, thinking what his wife might be doing right now. Paranoid thoughts were once again chasing through his head. But a plan was already taking shape in his mind. He would come home from work earlier than usual today and see whether his wife had someone in the house. If yes he certainly wouldn't hesitate to punish her. Pondering on a suitable punishment he turned to other things that needed to be done that morning.

Apart from the usual, he had to clear the porch, the steps leading up to the porch and the walkway of snow. This was a chore Mr. Higgs despised. He hated having to trudge up and down in the snow, wielding his shovel while more and more fresh snow fell. Mr. Higgs hated winter and anything that went with it. He decided not to shovel the snow that morning.

Mr. Higgs left the house at about quarter to eight. He locked the door and carefully walked across the porch and down the three steps. They did seem to be a little slippery and Mr. Higgs once again considered clearing them of that wretched snow. No, it could wait besides he would be late for work. He walked over to the gate, got in his car and drove off to work.

Mrs. Higgs came home at half past eight. She took a shower, made herself some breakfast and then sat down into an armchair with a book. She wasn't expecting anyone. She knew about Mr. Higgs's suspicions but they were all false. She wouldn't be surprised if he came marching in at that very moment demanding where she hid her secret lover and then went on a rampage around the house searching closets, and wardrobes. She smiled to herself at the thought of that happening. Her smile didn't last long. At that moment a loud thump came from outside.

Henry the postman opened the Higgs's gate. The Higgs couple didn't have a mailbox hanging on the gate. Instead they chose to place directly on the main door. Probably so they wouldn't have to walk that far when retrieving their mail. Lazy. He went through the gate and strode across the garden toward the Higgs's door. " Couldn't even take care of the snow, people these days..." This was probably one of Henry's last thoughts because as he was about to take the third step up the small stairs leading to the porch his foot slipped and Henry the postman fell to the ground, hitting his head on the porch steps with a loud thump.

Mrs. Higgs sat there, waiting for her husband to come bursting through the door. When the door remained closed she walked forward and threw it open

only to find not her husband but the local postman sprawled on the porch steps. Luckily for Henry Mrs. Higgs was a nurse and knew exactly what to do in such a situation. She crouched down next to him and reached out looking for a pulse. There it was, slow but steady. Henry the postman was still alive. His breathing seemed to be weak and irregular.

She would have to resuscitate It was about at this moment that Mr. Higgs's car came to a halt in front of the house. Unfortunately Mrs. Higgs didn't notice instead she leaned over Henry's body, her lips touched his and as she exhaled air was pushed into his lungs. By this time Mr. Higgs had gotten out of his car and all his attention was on his wife kissing the local postman that was laying there on the porch.

Mr. Higgs opened the gate, stepped through and closed it forcefully behind him. The clash of the gate made Mrs. Higgs look up. She immediately realized what she is doing must look like. She stood up and took a few steps down the stairs and into the garden toward her husband. Behind her Henry was waking, lifting his head, dazed.

" I know what this must look like Paul, but it's nothing like that" Mrs. Higgs stuttered. " He slipped and fell. I was giving him the kiss of life."

Mr. Higgs stood there staring into her eyes " It might have been the kiss of life for him but it's the kiss of death for you." It was the way he said it, a slow deliberate growl that made Mrs. Higgs react the way she did. Turning back toward the house she ran. Mr. Higgs didn't say anything to warn or stop her. He knew she wouldn't get far.

Mrs. Higgs running back to the house forgot all about how slippery the porch steps were. She was almost on the third step when her foot shot from under her. Mr. Higgs watched as if in slow motion as Mrs Higgs turned in the air and fell, hitting her head on the bottom stair. There was a sickening crunch and then silence. It ended as it began, with the porch steps.