

## Debra&John 4

Debra Newell, an interior designer in Southern California, meets John Meehan on an over-50 dating site. His profile looks exciting: Anesthesiologist, divorced, Christian. She falls in love fast. But her children dislike him and warn her that his stories don't add up. A psychologist advises Debra to set firmer boundaries with her kids, saying she has a right to be happy.



### 1. Reading

- 1) Look through the text quickly first. What happened?
- 2) Unjumble the questions at the end of the excerpt.
- 3) Read it out loud and ask questions for the "answers" in bold.

Thanksgiving was just around the corner. **Terra and her boyfriend** moved into the spare bedroom of the new Balboa Island rental for a few days. This made it hard for Debra **to maintain the illusion that John wasn't really living there**, though she tried.

Terra discovered the truth **the day before Thanksgiving**, when she opened a closet and found a **nursing certificate bearing John's name**. Her mom said she was getting his certificates framed, but Terra knew, and she did something uncharacteristic. She confronted her **loudly**.

Here came John, instantly transformed **by rage**.

/through his/Terra/why/stuff/snooping/was/? \_\_\_\_\_ ?  
/trying to/from him/ was she/steal/ why/Debra/? \_\_\_\_\_ ?  
/smacked for this/did/that kids/realize/should be/she/? \_\_\_\_\_ ?

Terra screamed at her mother: "could you/ guy talk/ like this/how/ to me/ let this/?!"  
" \_\_\_\_\_ ?!"

Terra left, badly shaken, with the sickening feeling **that her mother was choosing John over her**.

### 2. Listen to the snippet and complete each phrase with one word. For some of the gaps you have prompts in brackets \_\_\_\_\_ :

John had \_\_\_\_\_ (explain) for her kids' \_\_\_\_\_ (hostile) to him:  
they were \_\_\_\_\_ (jealousy),  
they wanted her \_\_\_\_\_,  
they were waiting for her to \_\_\_\_\_ (death),  
so they could \_\_\_\_\_ .

And he had an explanation for why he had a \_\_\_\_\_ (*nurse*) degree but called himself a doctor. He said he also had a PhD which earned him the right to the title, and he had advanced \_\_\_\_\_ (*train*) in anesthesiology.

### 3. Listen to the snippet and order the pieces \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_ “He was quite excited as little more nervous and kept saying ‘I can’t wait to be married to you’ and just ‘I’m so in love with you’ and so on.

\_\_\_ I felt that this was an opportunity to love again.”

\_\_\_ Every day now he was begging her to marry him. She resisted. She loved him, but she knew her kids would be furious.

\_\_\_ In early December, she was driving to Vegas on business and he was tagging along. Why not drop by the Courthouse while they were in town?

### 4. Listen to the snippet and mark the actions either with D for Debra or with J for John \_\_\_\_\_

couldn’t be sure where her husband went all day \_\_\_\_

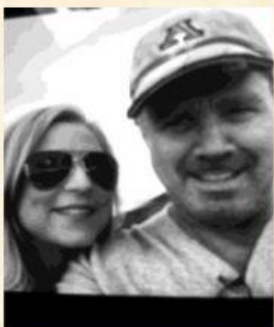
didn’t press that hard to find out \_\_\_\_

would put on his faded blue surgical scrubs \_\_\_\_

kiss her goodbye \_\_\_\_

disappear in her Tesla \_\_\_\_

never saw him bring home a paycheck \_\_\_\_



was too busy running business to pay much attention \_\_\_\_

sometimes did off the books works \_\_\_\_

had never been happier with a man \_\_\_\_

doted on her endlessly \_\_\_\_

running her errands the way her paid assistant usually did \_\_\_\_

making sure her bills were paid \_\_\_\_

sitting beside her at doctors’ appointments \_\_\_\_

would go get the cars washed, take the laundry in, go grocery shopping \_\_\_\_

*After an intruder appears in John and Debra's living room, John insists that they install security cameras. Debra begins to wonder whether he is spying on her. Her nephew, Shad, looks into John's background and confronts him with what he finds. Debra's vision of an idyllic marriage is shattered when she discovers a stash of paperwork in John's home office.*



### 5. Listen to the clip and join the chunks \_\_\_\_\_

in the stacks

from ex-girlfriends

legal

arrests

multiple

papers

jail

for stealing drugs

multiple restraining orders

of documents

a prison stint

terms

tried to

and coerce his victims

a treacherous

intimidation

very manipulative

possession of a firearm

uses fear and

of stalking

as a means to control

swindle her

convicted

con

a felon in

person

6. Read out the list of items. \_\_\_\_\_ Listen to this snippet and number all the things police found in the storage unit in Cathedral City in the order that you hear them

\_\_\_ duct tape      \_\_\_ binoculars      \_\_\_ eight cyanide capsules  
\_\_\_ syringes      \_\_\_ machine gun      \_\_\_ a fake ID  
\_\_\_ a Colt 0.38 special      \_\_\_ a pocket saw      \_\_\_ GPS units  
\_\_\_ a bottle of cyanide powder      \_\_\_ handcuffs  
\_\_\_ heavy duty cable ties      \_\_\_ counterfeit money

**Match the captions with pictures**

duct tape

heavy duty cable ties

a bottle of cyanide powder

syringes



7. Listen to the snippet and fill in the gaps with numbers \_\_\_\_\_

He spent \_\_\_ months in state prison and got out in June \_\_\_\_\_. And he spent a couple weeks in County jail that fall for violating order against another woman. He got out on October \_\_\_<sup>th</sup>, \_\_\_\_\_. He met Debra online on October \_\_\_<sup>th</sup>, \_\_\_\_\_ – \_\_\_ days later.

It made Debra think about her first date with John in a new light. She remembered how he'd thrown himself on her mattress and raved about how comfortable it was.

Debra: And I like "It's just a mattress." I realize he'd been in prison like a few days before that. Of course it feels good.