M 1 – first part of “The Legacy”

Virginia Woolf

A Haunted House, and other short stories

THE LEGACY

legacy – Vermächtnis

“For Sissy Miller.” Gilbert Clandon, taking up the pearl brooch that lay among a litter of rings and brooches on a little table in his wife’s drawing–room, read the inscription: “For Sissy Miller, with my love.”

pearl brooch – Perlenbrosche
inscription – Beschriftung

It was like Angela to have remembered even Sissy Miller, her secretary. Yet how strange it was, Gilbert Clandon thought once more, that she had left everything in such order—a little gift of some sort for every one of her friends. It was as if she had foreseen her death. Yet she had been in perfect health when she left the house that morning, six weeks ago; when she stepped off the kerb in Piccadilly and the car had killed her.

kerb – Bordstein

He was waiting for Sissy Miller. He had asked her to come; he owed her, he felt, after all the years she had been with them, this token of consideration. Yes, he went on, as he sat there waiting, it was strange that Angela had left everything in such order. Every friend had been left some little token of her affection. Every ring, every necklace, every little Chinese box—she had a passion for little boxes—had a name on it. And each had some memory for him. This he had given her; this —the enamel dolphin with the ruby eyes—she had pounced upon one day in a back street in Venice. He could remember her little cry of delight. To him, of course, she had left nothing in particular, unless it were her diary. Fifteen little volumes, bound in green leather, stood behind him on her writing table. Ever since they were married, she had kept a diary. Some of their very few—he could not call them quarrels, say tiffs—had been about that diary. When he came in and found her writing, she always shut it or put her hand over it. “No, no, no,” he could hear her say, “After I’m dead—perhaps.” So she had left it him, as her legacy. It was the only thing they had not shared when she was alive. But he had always taken it for granted that she would outlive him. If only she had stopped one moment, and had thought what she was doing, she would be alive now. But she had stepped straight off the kerb, the driver of the car had said at the inquest. She had given him no chance to pull up. . .. Here the sound of voices in the hall interrupted him.

to owe – schulden
token of consideration – Zeichen des Respekts

affection – Zuneigung

Venice – Venedig
delight – Entzückung
volume – Band

quarrel – Streit

to take s.th for granted – etwas als selbstverständlich ansehen
to pull up – anhalten

hall – Flur
to interrupt – unterbrechen

“Miss Miller, Sir,” said the maid.