

## 2. Meddling Mother-In-Law MS

Hello, this is the mini-story lesson for the Meddling Mother-In-Law, Dear Abby lesson. Here we go.

There was a girl named Tomoe. One day, she took it upon herself to change her husband. Tomoe was very picky. She wanted the apartment to always be perfectly clean, but her husband was a lousy housekeeper. One day, Tomoe said, "When you do the laundry, please sort the clothes by color." Tomoe was very polite, but her husband took this the wrong way. He yelled, "Why are you criticizing me? Why do you hate me? I'm not a lousy husband." Then he jumped up and down, pulled his hair, and said, "I wash my hands of this. I will never do laundry again."

Okay, let's go back to the top – this time with questions. You can pause and answer the questions, or you can answer the question quickly in your head. Here I go. Or just listen.

There was a girl named Tomoe. One day, she took it upon herself to change her husband. Did somebody tell Tomoe to change her husband? No, no, nobody told her. She took it upon herself. Did Tomoe decide by herself to do this, to change her husband? That's right. She decided all alone. She decided herself, "I will change my husband."

Did she take it upon herself to change her mother? No, no, no, she didn't decide alone to change her mother. She decided, by herself, to change her husband. She took it upon herself to change her husband. Did she take it upon herself to clean the house? No, she didn't take it upon herself to clean the house. She didn't decide, "Ah, I will clean the house." No, she took it upon herself to change her husband.

What did she take it upon herself to do? Well, she took it upon herself to change her husband. Why did she take it upon herself to change her husband? Well, her husband was a lousy housekeeper. He was a bad housekeeper. He didn't clean the house very much. So she took it upon herself – she decided herself – to change him. She didn't ask anybody else.

Tomoe was very picky. She wanted the apartment to always be perfectly clean. Was Tomoe very relaxed about the apartment? No, no, no, no, she was not relaxed. She was very picky. Everything had to be perfect. Everything must be perfect, exactly as she wants it, exactly like she wants it.

Was Tomoe picky about her food? Must she always eat food that is perfect, exactly how she wants it? No, no, no, Tomoe's not picky about her food. She will eat any kind of food. So no problem. She's not picky about her food. Is Tomoe picky about her clothes? Was she picky about her clothes? Well, no, no, she doesn't care about clothes. She doesn't care about fashion. She will wear anything.

What was she picky about? Well, Tomoe was picky about the apartment, right? Everything in the apartment must be clean. Everything must be in the right place. Tomoe was very, very picky about the apartment, not about her food, not about clothes, not about other things. She's very picky – was very picky about the apartment.

But her husband was a lousy housekeeper. Was he a good housekeeper? No, no, no, no, he was a very bad housekeeper. Did he clean the apartment a lot? No, no, he was a lousy housekeeper. He

never cleaned the apartment. Did he do the laundry a lot? No, no, no, he never did the laundry. Was he good at doing the laundry? No, no, he was lousy. He was bad at doing the laundry.

Was he good with washing the dishes? No, no, he was lousy with the dishes, too. He was a lousy housekeeper in general. He was lousy with housekeeping. He was a lousy housekeeper.

So, finally, one day Tomoe said, “When you do the laundry, please sort the clothes by color.” Did she want him to pick out the different clothes – to separate them and organize them by color? Yes, yes, of course. That’s exactly what she wanted. She wanted him to sort the clothes by color. Did she want him to sort the clothes by size? Big ones here, small ones there. No, no, no, she didn’t want him to sort the clothes by size.

Did she want him to sort the dishes by color? No, no, no, no, she did not want him to sort the dishes – the plates, the bowls, no. She did not want him to sort the dishes. She wanted him to sort the clothes. How did she want him to sort the clothes? Well, she wanted him to sort the clothes by color. That’s how. She wanted him to sort the clothes by color.

Okay, so she wanted him to sort the clothes by color. When she said this, she was very polite, very nice. Tomoe was very polite always, but her husband took this the wrong way. Did her husband understand Tomoe exactly? No, no, he did not understand. He thought she was angry. He thought she was criticizing him. She – he thought she was attacking him. He took this the wrong way. He took her words the wrong way.

She said, “When you do the laundry, please sort the clothes by color.” But her husband took this the wrong way. He misunderstood the words. Did her husband take this the wrong way? Take her words the wrong way? Yes, of course, exactly right. He took her words the wrong way.

Did her mother take it the wrong way? No, no, no, no, not her mother. She wasn’t talking to her mother. Her mother didn’t take it the wrong way. Her husband took it the wrong way. What did her husband take the wrong way? Well, her husband took her words the wrong way. When she said, “Please sort the clothes by color,” he took that the wrong way.

After he took it the wrong way, what did he do? Well, he took it the wrong way; then he yelled, “Why are you criticizing me? Why do you hate me? I’m not a lousy husband.” Did he think he was a bad husband? No, no, no, he said, “I’m not a lousy husband. I am not a bad husband. I’m not a terrible husband.” So he said, “I’m not a lousy husband.” He didn’t think he was a lousy husband.

Did Tomoe say he was a lousy husband? No, of course not. Tomoe’s polite. She didn’t say that. She didn’t say, “You are a lousy husband.” She only said, “Please sort the clothes by color.” But he took that the wrong way. Then he jumped up and down. He pulled his hair; and he said, “I wash my hands of this. I will never do laundry again.”

Did her husband wash his hands of doing the dishes? No, no, no, no, he didn’t decide never to do the dishes. He will continue to do the dishes. He washed his hands of doing the laundry. Did he wash his hands of all housekeeping? No, no, he didn’t wash his hands of all housekeeping. He didn’t quit all housekeeping. He will still do some other things, but he washed his hands of doing the laundry.

Will he ever do the laundry again? Will he ever do laundry again? No, absolutely not, no. He will never do laundry again. He washed his hands of doing laundry. He said, "I wash my hands of laundry." Yep, it means he will never do laundry again. He will never help with laundry again. He will never touch laundry again. Never.

Did he wash his hands of the relationship of his marriage? No, no, no, of course not. He didn't quit his relationship. He didn't quit his marriage. He said, "I wash my hands of laundry." He will never do laundry again.

Okay, very good. One more time up to the top. This time, if you want, if you want to practice speaking, I will pause after the key phrases. Please repeat them. When you repeat, copy my pronunciation; especially copy my intonation. When do I go up? When do I go down? And, remember, in English, we start high, ahhhhh, and we drop, ahhhhh, ahhhhh. So listen for that and copy it exactly. Here we go.

There was a girl named Tomoe. One day, she took it upon herself to change her husband. (Pause) One day, she took it upon herself to change her husband. (Pause) Very good. Tomoe was very picky. (Pause) Tomoe was very picky. (Pause) Good. She wanted the apartment to always be perfectly clean, but her husband was a lousy housekeeper. (Pause) But her husband was a lousy housekeeper. (Pause) Good.

One day, Tomoe said, "When you do the laundry, please sort the clothes by color." (Pause) Very good. "Please sort the clothes by color." (Pause) Good. Tomoe was very polite, but her husband took this the wrong way. (Pause) Good. But her husband took this the wrong way. (Pause) Very good.

He yelled, "Why are you criticizing me? Why do you hate me? I'm not a lousy husband." (Pause) Good. "I'm not a lousy husband." (Pause) Very good. Then he jumped up and down, pulled his hair, and said, "I wash my hands of this." (Pause) Good. "I wash my hands of this." (Pause) Very good. "I wash my hands of this. I will never do laundry again."

Okay, that is all. Now please pause or stop this and try to tell all of the story yourself. Use all of the new phrases, all of the key phrases; and try to tell all of the story. If you can't, don't worry. Relax. Just listen again. Try to listen to it every day.

See you next time. Bye-bye.