



## WE 007: Breaking news

Hi everybody. It's a new meeting, it's a new episode and it's a new chance to meet you, which makes me very happy. This episode is devoted to gossip. I believe all learners of English would love to take a random newspaper, visit any webpage and be able to go through it just like that. So, be able to understand it without much effort involved.

Of course, when I say any newspaper, I don't mean journals or any journal with some very specific topics, scientific ideas, complex problems because this is what journals are, they are devoted to scientific issues and they would require some very specific vocabulary. What I mean here is a daily newspaper, a newspaper that we can grab when waiting at the airport or even some tabloid newspaper and tabloid press.

I believe I don't have to explain the meaning of this expression, of the word tabloid newspaper because in Polish we use a very similar word describing that kind of press, so I am sure that you know very well what kind of newspapers I'm talking today about.

And yes, today we are going to deal with gossip or rumors. That's another word for it and gossip, this is just some extra remark here, that the word gossip is always in the singular form and rumor or rumors can be, as I have just said, it can be both in the singular and plural form. We are going to deal with the news connected with celebrities and other people known from front pages of magazines.

And as I was preparing this episode, I browsed through tabloid press to find out what was in the news and I sort of kept my ears to the ground and here is what I found.

So, the greatest news that is available in tabloid press in Britain is connected with David and Victoria Beckham because they fell prey to some attackers and



their house, their mansion actually cause it is not a regular house, it is a super big house, so it can be called a mansion, it was attacked and there were some unidentified men ransacking their garden in the Cotswolds mansion. They were masked. They used a ladder to have a look into the mansion's windows and they managed to run away unfortunately, and they are still at large, which is some very bad news.

It presents, I mean this attack presents a big problem because Cotswolds Hills is a special place of residence for many celebrities and after their attack, they do not feel that secure any longer and this very place that I'm talking about is also popular with prince Harry and Megan Markle.

David and Victoria Beckham love to spend their weekends at their mansion and after the incident they feel that they have to increase security at the place. The Beckhams are known, and this is very popular knowledge, they are widely known for their great love for their children, and so they are very protective of them. They could not possibly risk their comfort, health and security. It is even more problematic. So, the problem grows bigger because the Beckham family is traveling in Australia right now, so they are away from home and when they received the information, they got really upset and of course this is not surprising because everybody would be upset if they found themselves in their shoes, in their position, in their situation.

This is, unfortunately for celebrities, of course, for people that are super popular, this is, unfortunately, something for them typical, it happens in their lives very often that other people, some criminals, sometimes just fans, that they want to visit their houses. And this is what they do. Of course, it is illegal because this is trespassing, they are not allowed to enter their properties, but I believe that it makes their lives very difficult because of that, because they have to be ready and they have to increase their security and they have to be ready that there can be somebody who would love to meet them in person, in the flesh and somebody who would love to invade their privacy. So, I wouldn't like to be in their shoes right now, believe me and I believe that you wouldn't like to be in their position.



As I said, the family has been upset for a couple of days but there is yet another reason why Victoria Beckham is upset and as tabloids have it, she is sad after the interview which David recorded for Australian TV. He appeared on the *Sunday Project* where he was interviewed and he was asked about his career, his children, obviously about his marriage.

And this interview, I watched this interview, seemed very fine to me. I did not notice any traces of disrespect or anything there, but the press has it and it is becoming some really big news, that the statement from David about their marriage of 20 years, it was something that really hurt Victoria because he said it was hard work and there were some difficult situations that they had to face.

Well, I do not find the statement very disturbing, as I believe, and everybody who is in a relationship they know that indeed it is hard work and a lot of compromise, and a lot of situations that you have to deal with, you have to face, and you will have to find solutions for, but this information, this news, this sentence that he used during the interview, that was very upsetting for Victoria and the **gutter press** has it that she's been very upset ever since. Some newspapers even say that she has been crying for days. Of course, we don't know, right, because it is the tabloid press, it is the gutter press, so they can make up stories. But this rumor, this gossip that she has been devastated after the interview, it has been repeated on many occasions, in many newspapers, in many articles. So, I believe there must be something to it. Of course, we cannot check it. We will never know if that is true or not but this is what the press tells us.

So, it is really hard to say whether Victoria was really sad or not. What we know is what we can read in the press and tabloids are this kind of press, this kind of newspapers in which a lot of stories are coloured, they receive some extra colours, just to make them more interesting to read, this is their nature, this is how it all works.

And this is also something that Victoria was talking about in her interview which was delivered together with a front cover of the *Vogue* magazine. And with



this cover she was celebrating her career as a fashion designer. As I believe, she has been a successful fashion designer for 10 years now and from my perspective, what is truly amazing is how she transformed from a starlet of a girlsband into this respected designer.

And as a matter of fact, you can be criticized for actually anything. That reminds me of another story connected with the Beckham family, which I read about at the end of August this year and this very story is also connected with Gordon Ramsay and his family. And Gordon has already been featured in one of my podcasts and so it seems that he's this great food for the gutter press himself.

Still, the story that I'm talking about refers to Gordon's wife Tana and her birthday party. The two families, the Beckham family and the Ramsay family, they were celebrating this birthday together. They have this very great bond. They are these great families that have known each other for a long time and they treat each other as part of family actually, so they are so close.

They had a wonderful time back then, celebrating this birthday party, Victoria shared a picture from that party on her Instagram. The picture depicts happy people, happy families, happy faces, having the time of their lives celebrating the great moment and there is nothing you can complain about there, really believe me.

I saw the picture. It is a wonderful picture with smiling faces, smiling people. There's also this wonderful dog sitting there. But, it seems that there is something you can actually complain about and the thing that people, the Internet users, their fans were complaining about, it was connected with Harper, their youngest daughter, and it was connected with her shoes.

So, Harper is this daughter of David and Victoria and I guess you know how much they wanted to have a daughter because they are parents of four children. They've got three boys and they were dreaming about a daughter. So, they were super happy when their daughter was born. She was long-awaited. She seems a super regular girl. Super happy and yet there was a lot of criticism from fans, from



the Internet users. They criticized Beckhams for allowing, how funny is that, their daughter to wear high-heeled shoes. It is actually hard to say if the shoes were hers, yes, you can see when you have a closer look, you can see that she is wearing these high-heeled shoes, and it's hard to say if they were those special shoes designed for little girls or they were shoes of some adult woman, another girl who just let Harper wear them for a while.

Many girls do this. I remember I did that myself. So, I stole my mother's shoes and I was wearing them when I was little, just pretending to be a bigger girl than I was in fact, so this criticism, from my perspective, is something I don't really understand but yes, they fell prey to criticism because of the shoes.

It's up to you, right, you can decide yourselves whether it's worth that criticism or not, still it seems for me something that is just **exaggerated** and shouldn't happen.

Let's come back now to Australia for a while because this is what we started with, we started with their Australian visit, so we know that Beckhams are in Australia, and there is yet another very famous couple that is traveling in Australia right now. And this is prince Harry and his lovely wife Megan Markle. There is a reason, a very important reason why prince Harry and Mega Markle are in Australia right now.

Have to tell you that this reason is very close to my heart because it is connected with charity. Prince Harry is this patron of the event called the **Invictus** Games. I don't know if you know what Invictus Games are and this is what I'm going to do right now, I'm going to explain, I'm going to tell you how it all started and how it works.

So, these Invictus Games, they are just like Olympic Games, but they are not regular Olympic Games for regular people. They are organized for servicemen, both men and women, for their families and just to show the invictus spirit. Of course, as you can imagine the people who are taking part in these games, they are very often disabled. They are **confined to wheelchairs** and because they are



servicemen, it means that they devoted their lives to the country. They served the country and because of this service, very often, they suffered injuries. As a result of it, they are disabled right now and many people said that before the Invictus Games, before this ceremony, this event that was organized by prince Harry, who is their patron, as I have already mentioned, before that they felt very unhappy, and they felt that the society didn't need them anymore.

Right now when they know that each time they are going to meet their rivals, their competitors, that there is going to be competition, that there is going to be fun as well, that they are going to prove, to show how good they are and that they are worth something, so that makes these people super happy. They feel that they are needed. They feel that the society can accept them and they have this great spirit. They are fighters and they have this goal in their life because they prepare for some time, before they are ready to be there, before they are ready to compete and before they are ready to prove that they are as good as they were before the accidents or before their service ended. A fantastic, a really fantastic idea.

And the origin of this story is also very interesting because it all started in 2013. It was then that prince Harry visited Warrior Games and it was a competition for wounded servicemen organized by the US Department of Defense. And this is what he did. I mean, he stole kind of this idea and he moved similar games, a similar event to London and he became this patron of the games. He is very much involved in the event. He has attended every game so far and right now he is in Sydney attending this year's event.

So, this is the reason of their visit there, I mean his visit and his wife's visit, but, and there we have another rumor we all know, I mean even if you haven't browsed through tabloid press in Britain, but it is just impossible not to know about it, it is impossible not to get this information. I believe that everybody knows that his wife Megan is pregnant.



So, this is this great news. It is actually not a rumor anymore because it has been confirmed by the palace. So yes, she is pregnant and as they landed, the very moment they landed in Australia all eyes were directed at them and specifically at Megan, and her body and how she is changing.

I believe it must be very difficult for a woman to be pregnant for the first time and to be observed that much but well, this is the special lives that they are leading and I believe they just have to get used to it.

So, Megan is being observed. She looks absolutely stunning, absolutely beautiful in her pregnancy, of course, maybe she does not have that much energy because she has already resigned from some of the official ceremonies saying that it is the toll of her pregnancy and she had to stay in the hotel and she had to rest because she wasn't feeling very well.

So, it all looks wonderful, it all looks perfect. Everybody is just keeping their fingers crossed, because everybody is cheering for the couple. And I believe, well, she is very popular because of her social status, and every woman is observing her and her style and what kind of dresses she chooses because it is quite a thing to stay attractive and super pretty when you're pregnant. And of course she manages to do so, she looks wonderful, but there is a serious issue and this is something what worries the public so, on the one hand, they are very happy, they are supporting them but, on the other hand, they are also very worried because of the Zika virus.

I don't know if you remember the problem and the epidemic issue connected with the Zika virus, but it has come back. I mean this idea has come back to the press because Megan and Harry are going to visit some places that are potentially dangerous when it comes to Zika virus. They are traveling through Australia, but they are also going to visit Fiji, Tonga and New Zealand and the Tonga and the Fiji places are said to be dangerous because of Zika virus and the Zika virus is especially super dangerous for women who are pregnant.



But before we get there, I'll just put you in the picture and I'll just remind you what the story is all about. So, the Zika virus is spread by mosquitoes and the virus is known or has been known since 1950s, but it was dangerous only in some parts, in the belt connected with the equator from Africa to Asia. But starting in 2007 it has spread, it has spread across the Pacific Ocean to the Americas and it has been a really huge problem, a very difficult situation which led to an epidemic even. And the Zika virus, it can stay relatively not that dangerous just for any person, any man or any woman, but it is super dangerous for women who are pregnant because it can lead to some defects in the child, unfortunately, and there is no vaccination, actually, you cannot protect yourself really that much and Megan's trip abroad comes with this danger. However, there is this possibility of exposure to the Zika virus, but of course they have consulted this decision, their decision to travel in these countries, they have consulted it with their doctors. She's being monitored and they got their consent. And this is the decision that they have made that they are going to continue because, this is what they say, I mean the doctors and other scientists, other officials, they say that the possibility of her contracting the virus is actually not that huge but there is this possibility, unfortunately, because mosquitoes are known to develop in great numbers during the rainy season. And this rainy season starts in November and it continues until April or until May and this is exactly where Megan and Harry are going to travel. But the duchess will be kept away from rain forests and jungles, and she is in touch with the doctor. She's being monitored. So the chances of contracting this virus are very little and it seems very unlikely, well, but still there is such a possibility so the public and the crowd are really very worried.

Alright, so we started with a very serious piece of news, I mean, the attack and I guess that we are going to finish with some very serious information here. However, this idea of tabloid press is to deliver rather light entertainment and most of the time it does, it is light and easy to go through so I wish all of you this ability to browse through British and American newspapers and understand the context. If not all of it, I mean, if not all the words but most of the context that would be great.





And this is exactly what you learn English for. Yes, to be ready to communicate and understand. Please remember when you are going to read newspapers, when you're going to read real material, when you're going to read books, please don't **look up** every single word that you don't understand because it doesn't make sense. So, the result of it will be quite the opposite because you will get tired. So, just imagine you opening a newspaper or a book and then looking up every single word that you don't know and let's say that there will be like 15 words or even ten words on a page and I'm sure that you will be really tired with all these activities and you will not get the pleasure out of reading. So, my advice is to try to understand most of it from the context and believe me if there is this word that is very important and that makes it absolutely impossible for you to understand what is going on, then please look that very specific word up.

But most of the time, believe me, you'll be able to understand it from the context and for a start the idea is just to understand what is going on there and believe me when you do it, I mean, when you get this feeling, so imagine you're traveling abroad and just waiting at the airport and just taking any newspaper, reading it, and being able to understand the whole newspaper, the whole context, believe me, you'll be super proud and it'll give you this great energy and motivation for learning further. And the more you read, this is how it works, the more you read, the better you will become, so the easier it will be for you to understand what you're reading about and the same applies to listening.

So, the more you listen to, the easier it will be for you to listen to real material, to spoken English and this is what I know, this is one of the most difficult problems for learners that they don't understand what is being said. So, believe me, trust me, reading real material and listening to real material will make you heroes, believe me, in no time at all.

Please leave a comment as regards the podcast, how much you like it, how much you have learnt from it, how much you enjoy the transcripts because I do believe and I hope that you come back to the transcripts and read them because they are there for you to help you understand what I say here if it happens that you



don't understand every single word. And of course, it is there for you to go through the whole text.

Please subscribe to it. Please subscribe to the podcast then you will know when each new episode is released. As always, I have spent this lovely time with you, and I can't wait to meet you again. Bye for now. Cheers.



## GLOSSARY

**(be) devoted to** - oddany/ poświęcony czemuś

**gossip** - plotka/ plotki

**rumor** - plotka

**(to) browse through** - przeglądać/ przekartkować

**(to) keep your ears to the ground** - sprawdzać co w trawie piszczy

**(to) fall prey to** - paść ofiarą kogoś/ czegoś

**mansion** - rezydencja/ posiadłość

**(to) ransack** - przeszukiwać/ plądrować/ grabić

**(be) at large** - na wolności

**(to) trespass** - wtargnąć na czyjąś posiadłość bez pozwolenia

**in the flesh** - na żywo/ we własnej osobie

**gutter press** - prasa brukowa/ (**gutter**) ściek

**starlet** - gwiazdka

**(to) depict** - przedstawiać/ obrazować

**long-awaited** - wyczekiwany

**exaggerate** - przesadzać

**invictus** - niezwyciężony

**(be) confined to a wheelchair** - być przykutym do wózka

**serviceman** - wojskowy/ żołnierz

**stunning** - olśniewający/ zachwycający

**toll** - żniwo/ (też) opłata za przejazd

**vaccination** - szczepionka

**consent** - zgoda

**(to) look up a word** - sprawdzać słowo w słowniku