VERY SHORT STORIES WITH

THE PAST PERFECT CONTINUOUS TENSE

The Not So Foolish Manager

THE PAST PERFECT CONTINUOUS TENSE

AFFIRMATIVE FORM (+)

FULL FORM	SHORT FORM
I, You, He, She, It, We, You, They ↓ **had been sleeping**	I, You, He, She, It, We, You, They ↓ **'d been sleeping**

NEGATIVE FORM (-)

FULL FORM	SHORT FORM
I, You, He, She, It, We, You, They ↓ **had not been sleeping**	I, You, He, She, It, We, You, They ↓ **hadn't been sleeping**

EXAMPLES OF OTHER VERBS

Arrive	*Arriving*	Slice	*Slicing*	Make	*Making*	Sit	*Sitting*
Start	*Starting*	Look	*Looking*	Have	*Having*	Stand	*Standing*
Play	*Playing*	Stay	*Staying*	Bake	*Baking*	Buy	*Buying*
Ban	*Banning*	Plan	*Planning*	Do	*Doing*	Teach	*Teaching*
Stop	*Stopping*	Skip	*Skipping*	Get	*Getting*	Speak	*Speaking*
Marry	*Marrying*	Try	*Trying*	Run	*Running*	Write	*Writing*

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INTERROGATIVE FORM (?)

YES/NO QUESTIONS

Had | I, you, he, she, it, we, you, they | been sleeping?

WH-QUESTIONS

What had I been doing?

How long had you been sitting?

Where had he been hiding?

Who had been talking?

How had we been doing?

Why had they been working with their friends?

I first met him when he was forty-nine years old. He had been working as our company's Finance Director for years. Nothing kind could be said about him as he always wore a nasty frown on his head.

One day, I decided to confront him about his behaviour. My colleagues had had enough of his shouting and meanness in general. He had been sitting in his office when I finally broached the subject.

"I would like to talk about how you behave towards us. It would do everyone some good if you treated us kindly. We'd all be very productive. I think it is sheer foolishness to mistreat the people who are responsible for the success of your company."

"I have no time for that! Whoever told you that bosses are supposed to speak kindly to their employees? My management course didn't include '**COURTESY THEORY.**' I'm a damn manager and I'll talk as I want as long as I have what I want at the end of the day! What is this talk about 'foolishness' anyway?"

I remained quite because I hadn't expected him to be so blunt. What gave him the right to speak to me in that manner? Was it the money I received at the end of each month? Was it worth it? I wanted to leave the office and resign from that job right away I'd had enough. It is true that you can't reason with foolish people.

I'd been thinking about his despicable behaviour when one of my colleagues entered the office. To my great surprise, she tackled the same problem I had in mind. She also had something to say about his harsh manners.

"What's wrong with you? Aren't you happy with your salary? Do you want to be fired? Who told you to come to the lion's den?"

We told him that we cared about our jobs but he needed to show a good example with his manners. A little kindness could not hurt him...

In the end, he mellowed down. He'd understood the virtues of kindness. Gentleness and friendliness are not the equivalent of weakness. The greatest power is expressed through love. We do not gain anything from putting other people down.

Three months later, he came to my office. Since our last meeting, I'd only met him face to face on very few occasions. He hadn't been acting maliciously towards me. All the same, I was a little nervous when he came to see me. I didn't know what he would tell me.

"All along I had been thinking that aggressiveness and hostile behaviour bring the most out of many people. I think that this is not true. My first interest is in the company and I have seen how

much you have been able to accomplish with my change of behaviour. I had wrongly believed that brutality brings more productivity. I had been living in the dark; please forgive me for my past behaviour. It was not perfect, I admit. Will you all forgive a stray lamb?"

I was stunned. What a change of heart! What a miracle!

He left the office with a smile. I stayed put, not wanting to spoil the moment.

Nothing is impossible on earth...I thought. Nothing is impossible...The lion had finally been tamed and no one had been shamed in the process.

Better days for the company lay ahead. The future would be perfect.

Don't Call My Name

THE PAST PERFECT CONTINUOUS TENSE

AFFIRMATIVE FORM (+)

FULL FORM	SHORT FORM
I had been eating	I 'd been eating
You had been eating	You 'd been eating
He / She / It had been eating	He / She / It 'd been eating
We / You / They had been eating	We / You / They 'd been eating

NEGATIVE FORM (-)

FULL FORM	SHORT FORM
I had not been eating	I hadn't been eating
You had not been eating	You hadn't been eating
He / She / It had not been eating	He / She / It hadn't been eating
We / You / They had not been eating	We / You / They hadn't been eating

EXAMPLES (Eg.)

- I had been planning to see you.
- She hadn't been sleeping for days.
- He'd been running towards her.
- What had they been singing?
- She'd been talking to me when you arrived.
- I hadn't been eating or drinking.
- Had she been doing her homework?

INTERROGATIVE FORM

Had I been eating …?
Had you been eating …?
Had he/she/it been eating?
Had we been eating…?
Had you been eating…?
Had they been eating…?

He had not told them his real name. It had to remain a mystery. He had been living a secret private life, shrouded from everybody's view. They knew him simply as Matola — the one who picks.

The villagers trusted him because he worked like a beast. He tackled every chore he was assigned with incredible zeal. He was like a present sent from the past, untarnished and protected. He would do everything he could to remain in their good graces.

Luckily enough, no one asked any questions so there was no need for him to explain his origins. Providence had led him to this place when he had been wandering in the forest. Providence would keep him there as long as he did not disappoint anyone.

One day, another stranger arrived in the village. He had been walking for days. His clothes were tattered and he looked like he needed some food and water. Matola was the first person he saw.

"Good afternoon dear brother. Help a fellow human being. I'm tired and I would like to rest before I continue my journey. Where can I get something to eat?"

"Does this place look like a barn? Go away! There is no food here."

"Please, I'll starve to death if I don't eat anything. Don't you have some *nsima* somewhere?

"No."

Matola picked some stones and started throwing them at the stranger. The latter could not run away; he fell down, exhausted, unable to hide from his tormentor. Fortunately, a little child had witnessed the whole scene and he reported the matter straight to the Village Headman.

Soon, a group of people went to see Matola. They found the stranger groaning on the ground. He was hungry and thirsty and Matola had continued to ignore him all along. He had been so busy with his work that he did not see the men coming towards him.

THE PAST PERFECT CONTINUOUS TENSE

AFFIRMATIVE FORM (FULL AND SHORT FORMS)							
I	You	He	She	It	We	You	They
had been trying							
'd been trying							

NEGATIVE FORM (FULL AND SHORT FORMS)							
I	You	He	She	It	We	You	They
had **not** been trying							
had**n't** been trying							

INTERROGATIVE FORM							
Had							
I	you	he	she	it	we	you	they
been trying?							

"Dear Matola, what has been happening here?" the chief asked with a solemn voice.

Matola explained what had happened earlier. He thought that he had done the right thing by treating the unknown man poorly. The village had been protected from this evil man, so he thought. The headman did not have the same opinion.

"We should always treat each other kindly. You never know what the future holds. Imagine if you had been welcomed in the same manner. Every human being has something to offer. Don't think that someone is useless just because he hasn't got any money. Value is found in many areas of our lives."

"Oh", Matola thought. "I'm sorry dear stranger. I had not thought of you as a human being with needs. Please forgive me. I had been thinking that you were just a thief who wanted to disrupt our peace here. I once was a stranger too and I was welcomed here with open arms. Please forgive me."

In the end, the stranger was given some food and water. He stayed with Matola for a few days until he left. During his stay, the stranger had taught Matola some very useful and valuable skills concerning gardening. This new knowledge enabled Matola to improve his farming methods considerably.

Today, when you walk in the village, you will see a sprawling farm. It is proudly called '**Matola & Sons'**. Anyone who has been living in this place for a long time will tell you how a stranger with no money became the richest farmer in the village, thanks to his kindness and hard work. No one will tell you about the unknown stranger, but that is all right. Matola and the stranger know.

That is life.

THE PAST PERFECT CONTINUOUS TENSE

AFFIRMATIVE FORM	NEGATIVE FORM	INTERROGATIVE FORM	EXAMPLES
FULL FORM I, You, He, She, It, We, You, They had been planning **SHORT FORM** I, You, He, She, It, We, You, They 'd been planning I................................. You................................. He.................................	**FULL FORM** I, You, He, She, It, We, You, They had not been planning **SHORT FORM** I, You, He, She, It, We, You, They hadn't been planning She................................. We................................. You.................................	**YES/NO QUESTIONS** Had I, you, he, she, it, we, you, they been planning? **WH-QUESTIONS** What had I, you, he, she, it, we, you, they been planning? **Your turn** I................................. You.................................	• I had been planning to see you. • She hadn't been sleeping for days. • He'd been running towards her. • What had they been singing? • She'd been talking to me when you arrived. • I hadn't been eating or drinking. • Had she been doing her homework?