

## Sad but True.

“She can’t look after his children. She has no experience.”

I took a cursory glance at the two women sitting opposite me as the train pulled out of the station.

The one who spoke wore a bright red beany and had matching lips, the woman next to her wore a blue beany and had pale lips.

I was on my way for a monthly check up with a friend, who was an applied Pilates teacher, at her consulting rooms off the King’s Road. She cured a neck problem I’d had for years with individual exercises as well as manipulation and regular assessments. Her expertise, kindness and understanding were exemplary.

Red beany raised her voice, “I hate her! She’s too young!”

Blue beany nodded and said quietly, “You don’t hate her Amanda you’re just upset.”

“You don’t know her.” Red beany said. “She is despicable, and I never want to see her again.” Amanda’s face began to develop tones of her beany.

Blue beany looked horrified.

Head down into my book, I read the same word again and again.

Red beany continued, “When Eddie’s wife died, I cooked for Reggie and Tommy after school. Eddie was so grateful and offered to take me to the theatre as a ‘thank you’, but it was more than that. I knew he was waiting for a suitable time to express his feelings for me. It was early days and I understood. When Eddie went away on business, the boys stayed with me. By the way, you know that Lily is at Northampton, doing Arts and Crafts and Laura is at York on an Archeology course? They’ve been a joy to me since Tim walked out.”

Blue beany nodded.

I wondered if Lily was responsible for her mother’s hat.

Red beany continued, “When Eddie returned, he invited me over for Sunday lunch, as a ‘thank you’.”

The train stopped at Green Park. I wondered if there was a climax to this story. I really wanted there to be one soon.

“I wore my best jeans and a Gap white t- shirt, smart casual. Eddie opened the door, a quick hug and we went into the living room.

There was a girl perched on an arm of the Chesterfield. She wore a short, flimsy, buttercup-yellow dress. Dark blonde coils tumbled to her waist. Her pin - like legs reminded me of Lily’s when she was fourteen. She smiled and said she was pleased to meet me as she’d heard a lot about me. Eddie took her hand, turned towards me, and said,

“May I introduce you to my fiancée, Fiona”.

Tears moistened the red lips. Blue beany stroked red beany’s hand consolingly and said,

“Poor you”.

“The bitch. How dare she! Money grabbing little.....” Red beany screamed.

The train stopped at Knightsbridge. I got out.

I mulled over the conversation I ‘d just overheard, as I walked towards Fiona’s apartment and wondered whether I should invite her and Eddie to dinner soon.

501 words