

## MOTHER OF THE BRIDE

Jackie twisted her body in front of the changing room mirror so she could see the back of the dress she was trying on.

“What do you think?” She gave a little twirl in front of her husband, Bob, who was waiting outside.

“Nice” he said. “It suits you.”

“Nice? It has to be more than nice! I’m the mother of the bride. It has to be stunning.”

“It’s not what I would call stunning.”

Jackie sighed. This must be about the fifth shop she had visited and probably the fifteenth outfit she had tried on.

Jackie spent the next day, and any free days after that, looking for the perfect dress. Finally, in desperation, she used the John Lewis service where a specially trained sales assistant brought garment after garment to her cubicle.

“I’ll know it when I see it,” she told Bob, who, this time, had sensibly remained at home.

Finally, it happened. The perfect dress. And it fitted her beautifully. Yes, it was somewhat more than she had intended to pay but this was, after all, her daughter’s wedding day.

Of course, things didn’t stop there. She then had to find a bag, a hat and shoes to match her outfit.

At last the day arrived.

As planned, Bob left home before her. He was to pick up their daughter Lindsay and they’d travel together into London. A separate wedding car collected Jackie. Now and again she checked her hair and make-up in the car’s mirror and was pleased with what she saw.

They were early. Jackie was ushered into a side room and waited to be called. After a while the door opened and in walked Lindsay. The sight of her in her wedding dress brought tears to Jackie’s eyes. The two women hugged carefully so as not to spoil their outfits.

Jackie still had memories of her own father hugging her so tightly on her wedding day that he had dislodged her tiara and it had been wonky for all the wedding photos. Nothing was going to spoil this day!

There was a tap on the door. It was Bob. “They’re ready for us.”

“I walk in with Lindsay and you walk behind us.”

Jackie felt nervous for the first time. Until now she'd not met Mark's parents but Lindsay had assured her she would like them.

The music started up and the procession began. Bob, smiling proudly, took Lindsay's arm and began to walk her down the aisle. All heads turned to see the bride.

Taking a deep breath Jackie followed into step behind them. Their guests smiled and nodded as she passed.

They were now only a few feet from where the best man was waiting, alongside the groom and his parents.

Jackie looked up. Then did a second take. It couldn't be. But it was.

The groom's mother was wearing the identical dress to hers. And there was no turning back.