

Felicity

Once-upon-a-time, in a place called Epping, lived a girl called Felicity, who everyone – well, almost everyone – loved. But Felicity was sad because despite being a kind and caring young individual, she had left school with not a single certificate to her name and now found herself with no job and very little to do.

One day, wandering in the forest, she spied a nursery, a place she'd never ever noticed before.

'That's very strange,' she thought, 'I wonder if they might need a kind and caring young individual to help with their children.'

Well, miraculously, they took her on straightaway and in the twinkle of an eye she found herself in charge of Alex (who rarely spoke) and his six three-year-old friends.

"Oh! How I love you all!" she exclaimed, beaming.

'And we love you too!' they answered as one (except Alex) 'have a lovely weekend, Felicity; take care of yourself!'

To celebrate her new job, Felicity decided to visit her 'local' where her school-friends always went. She straightened her fringe, added a dab of blusher, then kissed her mother goodbye - and promised, of course, to be back by midnight. Then, she grabbed her purse, and the twenty pounds she'd taken out that afternoon, and caught the 305 into town.

'Flick!' her friends cheered as she entered the pub - all apart from Tanya who sat and glowered in the corner: Tanya, who was clever, cruel, and jealous of all pretty girls, especially Felicity.

Tanya elbowed one of the gang in the ribs: 'Urrggghhh! Look what the cat's dragged in. Friggin' Felicity with her floppy fringe!' and her friend giggled nervously, as Tanya was prone to violence. 'Oooh, she's done herself up, like the slag that she is,' which was as far from the truth as it was possible to be – but *nobody* argued with Tanya.

Now, across the pub, leaning on the jukebox, was Darren, a trainee para-med, and every girl's dream.

'Will you look at those pecs?' Tanya said, a little too loudly, through an increasingly drunken haze. 'What wouldn't I do to have the Kiss of Life from him!' and her friend snorted her approval.

Suddenly, to Tanya's horror, Darren and Felicity were talking, giggling, staring into each other's eyes! *Hold my Girl* played on the jukebox; a warm glow enveloped them as they smooched.

'Right! Enough! I'm moving in!' Tanya whispered darkly, 'Freckle Face has to go!'

She joined them at the jukebox.

'Dar, Flick...sick to see you!' she lied. 'Want a gobstopper?'

Felicity, so kind and naïve, picked a large one, popping it into her dainty mouth.

Immediately, she began to choke, and fell to the floor, Tanya's low cackle the last thing she heard as everything went black...

Next thing she knew two strong arms were around her waist and Darren was whispering her name softly in her ear.

'F'n Heimlich Maneuver!' Tanya yelled, disappearing forever into the cold, dark night.

Post-Script

Tanya lived happily ever after.

Felicity and Darren didn't.

500 words