

The cul-de-sac: Vivien Wilson

It was the school holidays and I was bored. Nothing ever happens in our cul-de-sac, I thought as I sat on the swing, idly pushing myself to and fro. All my friends were away. My parents were out for the afternoon and Georgie, my irritating elder sister, was supposed to be minding me. Georgie was very bossy and regularly liked to challenge me. 'I dare you to climb on the garage roof, Suzie,' she said, knowing it was strictly forbidden.

Glad of the challenge, I immediately scaled the old gate propped against the crumbling garage wall and climbed onto the roof. I looked out at the view. In the garden next door, hidden from their house by the potting shed, I spotted Mr Grubb from No.20 kissing Mrs Smythe from No.21. Mrs Grubb was Mum's best friend.

'See anything interesting up there?' Georgie asked.

'Maybe,' I replied.

'Well, what?'

'Not telling!'

'I don't think you saw anything!'

The next day I borrowed Dad's binoculars and positioned myself by my bedroom window. I had a perfect view of the cul-de-sac. I spotted Mr Grubb walking Otto, his dachshund. Minutes later Mrs Smythe emerged from her house with Fluffy, her miniature poodle. Mr Grubb doffed his hat and Mrs Smythe dipped her head. Hardly hot passion – unless, of course, it was a signal or a subterfuge. Next, I watched Mrs Grubb wave her husband goodbye as she drove off in her blue VW. Not long after, Mrs Smythe returned to her house carrying Fluffy, who, as usual, was being lazy and refusing to walk. This was getting tedious. Then, I spotted Mr Grubb, minus Otto, slipping into Mrs Smythe's house. Moments later, I spotted Mrs Smythe closing her bedroom curtains.

'Hey, guess what, Georgie,' I said, unable to keep this exciting development to myself a second longer. 'Mr Grubb and Mrs Smythe are having *a thing*.'

'Don't be stupid!'

'But I saw them kissing yesterday. And now they're in her house and they're doing *it*.'

'Who's doing what?' Mum said, peering into my room.

'Suzie thinks Mr Grubb and Mrs Smythe are having an affair!'

The following day we all watched as Mr Grubb scrambled to retrieve books, records, shirts and shoes from the footpath where Mrs Grubb continued to hurl them.

Vivien Wilson © 2024