

# Terry & Susan

2

**Terry** It's all right, Susan. You can come in. The Late Mrs Early

*Terry moves back to allow Susan Rickworth to enter. She is a very pretty girl of seventeen, dressed in a neat skirt and blouse, and carrying a small purse*

**Susan** (*nervously*) Are you sure it's all right, Terry?

**Terry** (*flopping on to the sofa*) Course it is. I told you. There's nobody in at all. (*He pats the sofa beside him*) Come on. Sit down.

**Susan** (*doubtfully*) I don't know . . .

**Terry** What are you worried about? It's not me mother, is it?

**Susan** Well . . .

**Terry** Look, I told you. She's gone over to me Aunt Ethel's. She'll be out for hours.

**Susan** How about your dad, though?

**Terry** Ah . . . you don't have to bother yourself about me dad. (*He pats the sofa again*) Come on.

*Susan perches beside him, looking uncomfortable*

Relax, can't you? Look—we'll have to tell him about it sooner or later, won't we? So *he* can break the news to Mum.

**Susan** (*suddenly*) Couldn't we just elope, Terry, and get it over with?

**Terry** Elope? What do you want to elope for? We can get married here in Castleford as well as anywhere else, can't we?

**Susan** Yes, I know—but—well . . . It's just the thought of facing your mother. I don't mind your dad so much, but . . .

**Terry** (*taking her hand*) Look. It's not as if we've got to get married, is it? I mean that would *really* make her blow her top. The fact is—we *want* to get married, and that makes all the difference.

*Susan looks doubtful*

Anyway, I don't see why she *should* kick up a fuss about it. It's not you she's got a grudge against. She's never even met you.

**Susan** That's the whole point, Terry. I'm scared of what she's going to say when she finds out it's me you want to marry.

**Terry** (*laughing*) What can she say? She must know I'm going to get married some time, so what's wrong with getting engaged now?

**Susan** (*exasperated*) Oh don't act so thick, Terry. You know what the position's like with your mum and dad and mine. They haven't spoken to each other for nineteen years, so how do you think they're going to react to a thing like this?

**Terry** (*darkly*) Probably with wholesale murder. It'll be like Romeo and Juliet all over again. Corpses littering the stage. (*With great drama*)

The rest is silence. (*He falls back on the sofa, eyes closed as if in death*)

**Susan** That's Hamlet.

**Terry** (*opening his eyes*) Oh. (*He sits up again*)

**Susan** It's going to be bad enough facing my mum and dad—but *yours* . . .

**Terry** There won't be any problem with me dad. He'll be only too pleased for us—but Mum . . . (*He shakes his head slightly*)

**Susan** Why should your dad be pleased for us?

**Terry** Why shouldn't he be? I mean—the row's got nothing to do with him, has it? It's between my mum and yours.

**Susan** I don't think so. I thought it was your dad and mum and my dad.

**Terry** My dad? Don't be daft. My dad's never fallen out with anybody in his life. He's far too interested in his flipping rose growing to waste time rowing with folks. No. It's Mum that wears the trousers in this house. If there's any rowing to be done, it'll be *her* that's doing it.

**Susan** I wonder what it was all about. You know. Why they fell out.

**Terry** I don't know. The only thing I *do* know is whenever somebody mentions your dad's name, Mum goes spare. Anyway, never mind about all that. That's their problem. We've got much more important things to be getting on with.