

Mi. The Misper

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The Misper

Good cop, bad cop

Today's a new start.

At least, it's supposed to be all new, but people keep on blurting out the same old stuff. *Fresh page. Line-in-the-sand. Put-the-past-behind-you.* It would be a good sign if someone said just one thing I haven't heard before. Just one thing, you know? Surprise me.

It might be new, but it feels old. All schools smell the same, of sweat and Dettol and *don't-wanna-be-here*. The stench wafts out of the reception area. I'm hovering outside while little groups and cliques wander past me, shaking off the rain, talking and laughing and squealing and all of that. Some kids turn their heads to stare, but most of them don't even see me at all. I turn to see Mum give me the thumbs-up. She spent about half an hour fussing around me this morning, even straightening my frizzy hair and letting me use a dab of make-up to cover a zit.

Usually she'd say, 'It's only school, Anna, not a catwalk.' My heavy eyeliner and dark-painted nails are definitely off limits. Mum wants me to make a good impression. And she's going to stand there with that fixed smile, getting wetter and wetter, until I go inside, so I guess I'd better move. I raise my hand in something like a wave, hold my breath and follow some kids in through the toughened glass doors.

Over and over in my head, I'm thinking what I should tell anyone who asks about my last school or where I used to live. The thing *not* to say is that I'm trying to escape. Or that I'm running away from someone who isn't even around anymore.

I knew this girl, you see. A sort of a friend. No one thought she really mattered much, but that turned out to be a mistake. Because she blew a hole through my life – and the lives of everyone I knew.

Last November 3

It was just after four o'clock in the afternoon and it was pretty dark. There were smells of gunpowder in the air, because the kids had been setting off fireworks every day since the shops started selling them. Any day at school was bad enough without Zoe. And usually any day without Kerry was a good one. But everything had been off its head today, like a weird dream where everything you think you know is not quite right. The best parts of the day were when no one was talking to me at all. The worst parts were when people asked me questions. Three-thirty couldn't come quickly enough and I'd part-run, part-walked home so fast I was out of breath. And there was a police car outside my house.

I stopped dead and took some big mouthfuls of air. It tasted of fumes, fireworks and frost. My first thought was to turn and walk away again, in the opposite direction. I almost did it. But then I pictured the inside of the house: Mum putting out the best tea cups and searching the cupboard for some good biscuits for the police officers. She'd have that worry-frown on her forehead, so deep it hurt me to look at it. Every minute

waiting for me would make it worse. So I reached for my front door key. It slipped in my damp hand.

They were the same officers who came round yesterday... and someone else. The light-haired woman detective and the fat bloke who was her sidekick. They were just what you see in the films — good cop, bad cop. I knew how they worked. She tried to get me to tell her what happened, by pretending to be my friend. He tried to get me to tell him what happened, by pretending he already knew and that he could see right through me. They said, 'Hello again, Anna.' And I guessed there was no good news.

The woman cop gave me that sympathetic smile. The fat bloke already had my mum's china cup in his fat fist and was dunking a biscuit in his tea. And the circles round my mum's eyes looked so dark, you'd think she'd drawn them on. All these things made me feel guilty: her smile, his sneer, Mum's face. Even though I didn't actually do anything. No good telling that to the cops. After all, somebody did something to Kerry. Whatever it was.

I said there was someone else there, too, this time. Another woman, younger, with spiky hair the colour of apricots and a row of earrings in each lobe. She looked like a scarecrow that'd been pushed into a skirt suit from Oxfam. They introduced her as Jenny and they rattled on about psychology. It turned out my mum agreed this woman can talk to me. A nut doctor. Great.

'You've been running,' said the lady cop. I raised my eyes and I stopped myself from saying: 'Well done, Sherlock Holmes,' only because Mum was in the room. The friendly one was called Sandra. Her hair was in the sleekest bob you ever saw, like she ironed it along with her blinding-white shirts. I just shrugged. I didn't want to say anything more than I had to.

'Well. Get your breath back,' she went on. 'I thought you and I might go for a little walk and have a chat.'

'I don't want to.'

My mum said: 'Anna!' in a hiss. I didn't want to see her face so I just stared down at the tablecloth, the best green tablecloth. I stared until its pattern blurred.

'If I'd said that to a policeman when I was your age I'd have got a crack round the head,' said the fat one. He smiled to make it sound like a joke. 'We don't bite, pet. We just have to find out what happened to Kerry.'

I looked over to Sandra, who gave me a wink, as if we were somehow in this together. She stood up. 'Come on, we'll leave Rob to get even fatter on your mum's nice biscuits. Let's go out for a bit of air.'

Jenny stood up too. My mum gave me one of those tiny little digs in the back. It was like, Behave yourself. Don't make things worse.

'Nothing to worry about,' Sandra added.

It was darker and the pinch of cold in the air made my eyes water. The three of us walked down past the row of houses and I didn't have to be told which way to go. The Cut. Scene of the crime or scene of the whatever-it-was that really happened. Maybe.

'I guess you're having a tough time.' Sandra had a sigh in her voice.

I shrugged back. 'You guess right then. No wonder you're a copper.'

Silence. Then: 'Anna,' she said. 'I'm not having a go at you. I know it must be terrible for you. Don't treat me like an enemy. I just have to find out what happened. It's my job.'

'You're not doing it very well, then, are you?' I expected her to get angry, but she just laughed.

'You're right. I'm not, am I? But think about this. If you're having a tough time, how do you think it is for Kerry's mum? And the rest of her family?'

I kept my eyes down and under my feet the paving stones seemed to slide along of their own accord. When I first moved to our street I was a bit scared of Kerry's mum. She was really strict with Kerry and I could see why Kerry didn't argue back. She had black shiny hair, cut short and boxy like a man. She was – not fat, not really, but sort of square. You wouldn't rugby-tackle her 'cause you'd lose. I once heard my mum call her 'buxom' which I thought was a hilarious word. She didn't say it to her face, of course.

That morning, though, when I was about to go to school, Kerry's mum wandered out of her house, just wearing her dressing gown and slippers. Somehow in the space of two nights she'd turned into a different person. She didn't look square-shaped any more. Her skin kind of hung off her face. She started walking up and down and shouting for Kerry, until Kerry's dad came out, took her arm and walked her back inside. I hid behind the fence until her door closed.

We reached The Cut. The Cut is what it says it is, a little cinder path between Scrogg's Field and the other side of our housing estate. It's the sort of place parents tell their kids not to go on their own. They do go, of course, sometimes for a dare more than anything. No one used it when it rained because it was a total mud bath and you couldn't tell the wet soil from all the dog dirt.

There were stories about The Cut. They said a man kicked a dog in the head and left it to die in there. The older kids used

to tell the little ones that you could sometimes still hear the ghost-dog whining, at nights.

Sometimes Zoe and I used it as a quick way home from school. Not today, though, obviously. It had police tape around it and an officer in uniform standing at the entrance. Sandra nodded at him and he stood back to let her past.

She switched on a torch and beckoned me. It was the smell I noticed first. That mixture of earth and rotting leaves and dog wee, saturating the cold air. I shuddered. 'It stinks.'

'Places like these always stink,' Sandra said.

The frost had hardened the mud quite a bit, so walking was OK. Sandra swished through the leaves and branches, sharp and still icy-wet. She kept moving her torchlight around. 'OK, Anna. So you all came in here on Hallowe'en night?'

I'd already been dragged through this story, so many times since Sunday that I'd lost count. I couldn't decide if Sandra didn't listen properly or if she was trying to catch me out. There was only one thing we knew for sure. Here was the last place we saw Kerry.

'Hang on.' I stopped walking. 'Is Zoe doing this too? Have you even spoken to Zoe?'

I couldn't see Sandra's face but that Jenny woman was right beside me and she gave me an odd look, as if I'd said something really mad.

'What?' I said. A couple of seconds of silence. 'What?' I asked again.

Sandra gave a little sigh. 'Zoe is really not well today, Anna.'

'San.' Jenny reached across and pulled Sandra's sleeve. 'I can't believe Anna doesn't know yet. You should — we should tell her.'

My insides squirmed. 'Tell me what?'

Sandra turned to me and pressed her lips together for a moment. It was a long moment. 'Zoe is in hospital, Anna. We're not sure... They're doing all they can.'

I wrapped my arms around myself to stop myself shaking. It was so cold. My teeth started to rattle and I couldn't stop them. My eyes blurred and I couldn't see. It was so very dark.

Zoe. And Kerry

This is how it started. I only came to live near Zoe — and Kerry — when Mum and Dad split up. Mum said she couldn't afford to keep running the car so she needed to be just a bus ride away from work. And there was a school I could walk to, one that even got better exam results than my old one, so it all made sense. To them, anyway. Not to me. But then, nothing that happened round the time of their divorce made any sense to me.

I had friends at my last school, but only sort-of. I wasn't a total no-mates, but I wasn't part of the in-crowd either. I spent my time circling the outside edges of one group or another. Sometimes I got asked along to things and sometimes I didn't and there seemed to be no particular logic behind it. I often thought that, to be honest, it might be better if no one ever spoke to me. At least then I wouldn't get to hear about all the things I missed. All I really wanted was a best mate, but somehow they were all taken.

When I left, the class made me a great big card and it said things like 'Anna, we love you, we will really really miss you xxx.' This was from girls who'd hardly glanced my way in three years. My mum went a bit teary-eyed when she read all the messages and said she was sorry to be taking me away from so many friends. I shook my head and said it didn't matter, because it really didn't. Not that.

I moved away from Dad and in with just Mum, in a tiny little box of a place. Mum kept saying it was just right for her to manage and the rent wasn't bad and that it would all work out somehow. She was so wrong.

I met Zoe on my first day. It was May, which is a rubbish time to start a new school. The school secretary showed me to my new class and the teacher said my name while I stood there like an idiot beside her desk. I looked at the rest of the class and their blank faces.

'I think,' said Mrs Bennett in an overly-bright tone of voice, like someone who's just had a fantastic idea, 'I think I will sit you next to Zoe Sawyer.' I followed her gaze to the back corner of the classroom and the only spare desk. Next to it was the girl who must be Zoe. She was doodling and didn't even look up.

'Zoe.' Mrs Bennett raised her voice as I made my way down the aisle towards the empty seat.

'Hi,' I said, scraping back the chair. My voice came out in an embarrassing squeak. Zoe lifted her head. She had a long curtain of straight, milky-brown hair. Her skin was the palest and smoothest I'd ever seen, like paper. Her nails were painted black with scarlet tips.

'Zoe, I want you to look after Anna and show her where things are and where the lessons all take place. And make sure she settles in.' I could tell Mrs Bennett was already wondering if she'd made the right decision.

Zoe hardly said anything to me that first morning, apart from telling me where to find each room and adding, 'Enjoy,' in a bored monotone each time. At break time, I hoped we could sit and chat. But she opened a sketch book and started drawing.

Three girls strolled up to me, smelling of their boyfriends' or brothers' cheap body sprays. 'Wow, you really got the short straw,' one of them said. 'You can come round with us instead if you want.'

I glanced back at Zoe's black and red nails and the amazing manga-style drawings she was doing, all out of her own head. And back up at the three girls with their identical blonde haircuts and their matching label bags.

'I'm fine,' I said. 'Thanks.'

The others shrugged and turned away. I didn't catch what they said to each other, but after a few seconds the sudden sound of their laughter sounded like glass being smashed.

Zoe carried on scribbling and still didn't look up.

'You didn't have to do that,' she said, after a few minutes. 'Don't expect me to be grateful.'

'I don't,' I said, but when I thought about it, that wasn't true. I had some Disney-fied idea in my head that I'd just stuck up for her and so we'd suddenly become best friends.

I watched the sort of sketches Zoe drew on her book and I made a note, in my head, of some of the little things about her. She liked drawing the same sorts of things, again and again: skulls with spiders coming out of their eyes and witchy-looking girls with clothes that looked like cobwebs. Knives with jewelled handles and snake-like creatures with bloodied fangs. She was just doing them with a cheap ballpoint, but they nearly leaped out of the page, they were so real-looking. When she showed me where the girls' toilets were, she brushed her satiny hair in front of the mirror and tipped some strong-smelling, herby scent out of a tiny bottle onto her wrists. It wasn't anything I'd seen

or smelled in Boots. When she got changed for gym she did it really quickly and modestly, like you might wriggle into a swimsuit behind a towel on a busy beach. She had bruises on her back. Blink and you'd miss them, she was so fast, but I didn't blink.

It turned out she lived a couple of streets away from my new house, but she didn't seem keen on walking home with me.

'I take it you can find your own way home?' she said. 'Don't need me to show you that?'

'Well, no, but I thought –'

'See you tomorrow then.' She strode off in the opposite direction, leaving me breathing in the last of her scent.

When I walked into the house, it was the first question Mum asked. 'Was there anyone nice to be friends with?'

I sighed. 'Maybe.'

'Come on, then, Anna. I've been worrying about you all day.'

'No, you haven't, Mum, you've been selling houses.'

Mum clicked the kettle on. 'Hardly. No one's buying houses round here at the moment. They're not even looking in the estate agents' windows. Anyway, I can worry about you at the same time.'

So just to shut her up, I told her a bit about Zoe. I didn't say she'd hardly spoken to me and that she only showed me round because she had to. But I mentioned that she lived nearby. Mistake.

'That's great! Why don't you ask her round at the weekend? She can come for tea or – or – a sleepover, if you like.'

‘Mum, I’m not ten any more. I’m fourteen. I’m not asking someone round for tea or a sleepover.’

Mum blinked. ‘No.’ Then she laughed at herself. ‘Sorry.’

My insides went hot. I put my arms around her. ‘No, I’m sorry. School was fine. Take me off your worry list. I’ll be all right.’

On Saturday morning, Mum had to work, so I took the bus with her into the city centre and promised to meet her for lunch. Then I sought out a shop called Dead Bouquet that I’d found by searching online. It was on a little side street off the main shopping mall and clustered around its doorway were bunches of kids, all with the most amazing clothes and hair. It was like a costume party, though I’m glad I never said that to any of them. I felt so boring and high-street that I almost turned and ran. At the same time, I felt kind of invisible, without the black, purple or red clothes, eyeliners and gelled-up hair style. But I made myself go inside.

It was a tiny shop, down a few steps, dark and smelling strongly of some kind of earthy incense. There was loud music playing that I didn’t recognise and it was hard to get to anything because even a handful of people made the shop crowded. I could see the kind of things that I reckoned Zoe would love: candles that looked like skulls, racks of dark, theatrical clothes, tarot cards, heavy silver jewellery shaped like crosses and daggers.

I wasn’t entirely sure why I was here.

I fingered a fat notebook, the cover embossed with a design of the kind of weeping-lady statues you find in

graveyards, all grey except for the red of the roses at her feet. The inside pages were plain, so Zoe could use it as a sketch book, I thought. It was ten pounds, which felt crazy for a plain notebook, but I had enough money with me and without really thinking too hard I took it up to the till. I could barely find the space to put the book down because the counter was cluttered with lit candles in glass jars, their flames wavering at every movement, baskets of knotted-up jewellery and messed-up piles of leaflets and flyers.

‘I like your book,’ said a voice behind me and I turned to see Zoe.

My insides gave a little flip. ‘Glad you said that. It’s for you.’ I held it out to her and hoped I wasn’t blushing.

She didn’t take it. ‘What for?’

‘I thought you could draw in it.’

‘I can see what to do with it. I meant, why are you giving it to me?’

I felt my face grow hotter. ‘It’s – it’s to say thank you for looking after me this week. I know you didn’t want to. I suppose I was a complete pain in the neck.’

She thought about it. ‘No, you weren’t. I kind of like you. If I didn’t, I’d’ve sent you into the boys’ changing room and left you there.’

‘Right. Thanks for not doing that.’ I held out the notebook again and this time she took it.

‘I didn’t have you down as a goth,’ she said, looking at my chain store jeans and my pink hoody, which felt over-bright and completely unsuitable, like I’d arrived at a funeral wearing a clown suit.

‘I – I’ve only just found this shop,’ I said, as if that was an explanation. ‘I love the stuff, though.’

‘Want to get a drink?’

I found myself following her out into the bright morning, blinking in the faint sunshine and the breeze, and strolling towards a little cafe next to the art gallery. The scent of incense was still clinging to our clothes.

Zoe ordered a green tea with peppermint, so I did, too. I paid with the last of my money. She looked even more striking out of school. She had dark eyeliner that made her pale eyes look like pearls and she wore deep, deep red lipstick. Her hair was in two heavy plaits. Under her coat she was wearing a blood-red velvet T-shirt that I longed to stroke.

I told her I’d been reading *Dracula* and how much I loved it. We talked about it and then about Mary Shelley and she mentioned some books I’d never heard of. Then I bumbled on for a bit about my mum and dad. Zoe told me she just lived with her mum too.

‘Do you see your dad much?’ I asked.

‘Hardly, he’s dead,’ she said.

I put my face in my hands. ‘I’m sorry.’

Zoe gave a little pout. ‘It’s fine, I never knew him. I just wish it’d been my mum who died instead. He can’t have been any worse than she is.’

I stared at her. How do you answer that? ‘That’s a pretty drastic thing to say. What’s the problem?’

Zoe shrugged and clinked her spoon around inside her mug. ‘We just don’t get on.’

I waited, but she didn’t say any more.

After that, we started hanging around together, at school and at home. I reckon Mum was a bit put off at first by Zoe's clothes and make-up, but she was cool about it, even when I started trying to dress the same way.

'Your grandma was really strict about clothes when I was your age,' Mum told me. 'I was dying to spike up my hair and wear the sort of things my friends had, but she wouldn't let me. I always swore I wouldn't be the same. It's not worth us fighting over something as daft as clothes.'

Dad wasn't quite as cool, though. He would come to see me at the weekends and he got a bit moody when I would rather be with Zoe. In some ways, I wondered if it would be easier if he didn't come at all. It was all so weird. He rang the doorbell like a visitor and stood on the step rather than coming inside. If he did pop in for any reason, he'd just have to make a tiny little comment and Mum would go up like a nuclear mushroom cloud. They'd start screaming at each other, while I stood there as if I was invisible. I sometimes thought it wasn't worth the hassle.

Plus, I was pretty angry with him myself, because he was living with some new woman called Ellie who I refused to go and meet. Even if I wanted to — and I definitely didn't — I reckoned it would hurt Mum if I hung out with this Ellie, like she was just some normal person instead of the witch who broke up our family. I would find myself starting a row with Dad about nothing and I didn't quite know why I'd done it. So all in all, it was best when I went out with Zoe instead of my dad.

I haven't said much properly about Kerry, and it's time I did. I'm going to say what no one says about Kerry any more. She was a total pain in the butt. There are good reasons why no one says this about her now, but it was true. Even when I made my mind up to be nicer to her, she didn't make it easy. Most of the time, she was the last person Zoe and I wanted to see.

The whole Kerry thing was all my fault, really, right from the start. Zoe and me got pretty close, after a while. That was just as well, because being goth meant that most of the other girls treated us like something they trod on. Maxine and her gang of hanger-ons were the worst. We were their new target for snipey comments and insults. But Zoe gave off attitude like some kind of force field. When we were together, no one really messed with us.

It all started on this one day when Zoe was off school. The teacher said she had a stomach bug, but I'd noticed Zoe would take the odd mystery day off and she would never tell me much about it, even if I asked. If there were fresh bruises, she wouldn't be persuaded to say anything about them.

So I was on my own. We were being sent out on what they called a cross-country run, although there was no countryside for miles. And we had to go in pairs. I didn't want to be caught on my own out of school by any of the other girls and get beaten up or pushed into a skip – that did happen from time to time. And I knew that Kerry was the only other one in the class who would have no partner. She didn't have anyone to hang about with at all. She spent her break times pestering the teachers and helping them tidy classrooms and all that little-kid stuff. I'd thought

at first she had some kind of learning problems, but that didn't seem to be true, because she got great marks in things like maths and science. She just wasn't someone you wanted to be seen with. I'd mentioned it before, because I felt a bit sorry for her, but Zoe said she was most definitely not our problem.

So – stupid, stupid me! – I wandered up to Kerry and asked if she'd partner me for the cross-country lesson. She looked like I'd just given her a hundred quid or something.

She couldn't have been more different to Zoe. Or me, for that matter. Kerry was a head taller than either of us and a bit plump, with a haircut that looked like her mum did it with a pair of blunt scissors. And she had a loud voice and an even louder laugh that made me want to cringe. I tried to jog beside her and keep a bit of a distance, at the same time. Neither of us were sporty types, so soon everyone else went past us. One or two girls made some comments about nerds and loonies and all the usual rubbish. One of them pelted some chewed-up gum at us. But I had some kind of a 'Look after Kerry' head on that day, so I swore right back at them and gave them the finger.

We went towards the little row of shops near the school and Kerry offered to go to the bakers and get us something to eat.

'You've got money?' I asked. We weren't supposed to take money out with us, because we weren't supposed to spend our PE lessons in the shops.

Kerry gave me a big grin and pulled out a purse she was wearing on a cord round her neck.

I laughed. 'I haven't worn one of those since primary school.'

Kerry pushed the purse back down her gym shirt. 'I have to,' she said. 'Where ever else I put my money, someone finds it and takes it.'

'Just keep it in your bag,' I suggested.

Kerry shrugged. 'People take things out of my bag, all the time.'

'Right.' I couldn't think of anything else to say, because I knew what she meant. Some of those girls would grab your bag, pull things out of it right in front of you and then deny it to your face. I'd seen Maxine empty Kerry's books out all over the floor and stamp on them, just because she felt like it. No one ever stopped her.

I could smell the bready, meaty scents from the baker's now and my stomach growled. As we walked in from the grey, cool morning, blowing on our fingers, the shop was warm and steamy. There was a young lad behind the counter who I'd noticed before. Black hair and a crinkly sort of a smile.

'Hiya,' he said, looking at Kerry like he knew her. 'What can I get you?'

'Two sausage rolls and two cups of soup.'

I looked from one to the other.

'Oh,' Kerry said. 'This is my brother, Luke. This is Anna. She hasn't been at our school very long.'

'Hi.' I turned away to look at the fridge full of cakes, because I could feel my face warming up. He was kind of good-looking. On the way out, Luke grinned. This time I was sure it was meant for me and not for his sister.

We took the steaming cardboard cups of tomato soup and the oily packets of sausage rolls and we started our slow stroll back towards school. I began quizzing Kerry

about Luke. He was seventeen and at the local Further Education college, but he worked part-time at the baker's. When I pressed her, Kerry said he didn't have a girlfriend right now.

'He seems very –' I hesitated. 'Nice.' Most girls would immediately start teasing me, but not Kerry. 'He doesn't really look like you, though, does he?'

Kerry shook her head. She was wolfing the sausage roll and making a bit of a noise as she ate. I tried not to cringe. 'He's only my half-brother really,' she said. 'My dad was married before.'

'Right.' For a horrible moment, I thought about my own dad and his girlfriend. Half-brothers or sisters? I pushed that thought away. 'That must be awkward.'

Kerry shook her head. She had flaky pastry crumbs on her mouth and I wiped my own lips with a tissue, hoping she would do the same. She didn't notice. 'No, it's really fine. Luke's my best friend.' She crumpled the greasy paper bag and threw it in a litter bin. 'I don't really have any others.'

Again, I didn't know what to say. Kerry finally swiped her mouth with the side of her hand, with almost no effect on the crumbs, and linked arms with me. 'Thanks for being kind to me,' she said, making me wince a bit inside.

I put up with her arm in mine for a few minutes then wriggled away, pretending to do something to my shoe laces. I didn't want to think too hard about what it must be like to be Kerry.

I felt quite pleased with myself afterwards, because I thought I'd done a good-deed-for-the-day. That should've been the end of it. Trouble was, the next morning Kerry

bounced up to me and Zoe like she had the right to be there, and I didn't have the heart to tell her to push off.

Every time Kerry spoke, Zoe just looked stunned, as if she'd been punched in the face. She finally got me on my own in the girls' toilets at the end of break. 'What the hell happened?' Zoe demanded. 'How come we have that big klutz following around like she suddenly owns us?'

I confessed about the cross-country walk.

'You asked her?' Zoe smacked her hand on her forehead and swore. 'Are you mad? She won't leave us alone now. She'll think you're her best buddy.'

'She's OK, really,' I said. 'I think she's just lonely.'

Zoe shook her head and turned away from me. 'You sap.'

'Hey,' I said. 'Have you seen Kerry's brother?'

'Pasty Boy?' Zoe wrinkled her slender nose. 'What about him?'

I followed her out into the corridor. 'Nothing,' I said. 'We just saw him yesterday, that's all.'

Zoe turned to me with eyes like tiny knives. 'Tell me you don't fancy him?'

'Course not.'

'You've gone red.'

'Don't be stupid,' I said. 'It's just hot in here.'

Zoe was right, of course, about everything. After that day Kerry clung to us like that sticky weed that attaches itself to your clothes and won't be brushed away. And I did kind of like Kerry's brother.

Funny, though. We thought we'd never get rid of Kerry. Now, it's getting harder to see her real face in my head. Only the picture from the police posters is really clear.