



Kitchen Conversation

by Stuart Carruthers

The old clock on the wall had long stopped working. Time wasn't important in the house. As the kitchen door latch creaked into life, Elliott Thompson carefully stepped down into the kitchen.

"Turn that racket down can you please, the Today programme is a classic example of what a safe non exciting marriage sounds like" said Bill as his grandson passed the radio.

The warm hazy summer sun, cast an uneven shadow over the stone floor and the sweet smell of wild flowers drifted in through the open stable back door. They were comfortable in each other's company, so much so that nearly five minutes had passed before either one bothered to say anything.

Folding down the top of his paper Bill advised Elliott to pull up a chair, "We need to have a chat son".

"How long are you staying for?" Bill enquired

"Not sure, you don't mind if I say for a while do you?"

"As long as you don't invite that irritating friend of yours around" laughed Bill, as he poured Elliott a fresh cup of tea.

"When did she leave?" asked Bill.

"Tuesday morning, I came home from work and she'd gone".

“There are a lot of things we don't want to know about the people we love,” said Bill.

Elliott didn't understand what his granddad had said.

After a brief silence Elliot replied, “we don't live in each other's pockets”

“And that's the way it needs to stay Elliott”, it gives the relationship that extra spice. You're a young man, your whole life is stretched out before you”.

“We've had our arguments, everyone does, but this was different.”

“Don't worry, you'll do worse when you get older, did you mean what you said?”

“I can't remember what I said granddad.”

“Your grandmother had many secrets and so do I, there's nothing wrong with that.”

Elliott stood up and made his way to the back door. As the sun warmed his face a tear slowly rolled down his cheek. It hadn't gone un-noticed.

Carefully folding his paper Bill cleared the table, turned off the radio and said, “call her tomorrow, now let's go fishing.”