

Bourne toWrite...

creative writing
workshops

The Catch

by Sue Hitchcock

“Longbotham's coming this afternoon!”

Phoebe sniggered at Hedda's use of her lover's embarrassing last name -she knew, of course , that “botham” had nothing to do with “bottom” but derived from “boat home”. Still it was typical of Hedda to choose the embarrassing option.

Andy, her husband did not react, “I've got something to fix on the car,” and he made himself scarce.

Hedda had longed for some passionate reaction from him and her provocations were escalating. As a scientist and engineer Andy preferred to make decisions only after a full consideration of the facts. This should have been the last straw, but he had to consider the outcome for their seven-year old daughter. Hedda was an artist and was now making her third attempt to graduate at Art school. Her desire to be with Andy had triggered her leaving the University, where she and Phoebe had shared a room. Then she got pregnant and did not complete her studies at St. Martin's. Motherhood did not suit her and it had soured her marriage.

When Longbotham and his delicate, shy wife arrived, they all assembled in the sitting room for coffee. Hedda's daughter, Rebecca, was observing the awkward and subdued reactions. Once the coffee mugs were out of the way, Hedda began a cushion throwing game. The game was not one where rules applied and a variety of messages were being imparted. Rebecca was at the age when rules were meant to be obeyed and she was puzzled and disappointed.

Of course Phoebe and Jack, her husband, Andy and Mrs Longbotham tried hard to give her a fair chance, but every time Hedda should have given Rebecca a turn, she cheated her of the chance.

“Give her a go!” pleaded Phoebe.

“She needs to know, life's not fair. Best she should find out now!”

Andy took the weeping Rebecca away, as she shouted, “I'm going to be a witch, when I grow up! You wait and see!”