

10 minute easy read

*Keep right on to the
end of the road...*

Philip Sleight

"Yippee," said Doris, as she looked out of the front room window, "any minute now my new life will begin. I'm going to learn to drive!" She looked at the clock on the mantelpiece for the tenth time in as many minutes. Time to put my shoes on, she thought, as she slipped off her slippers and put on her new brown laceups. When she saw the car with a big red L on the roof turn into the Avenue, she could not resist saying again, "Yippee!"

She had been a widow for three years now and she had missed Eddie very much. It would not be true to say that theirs had been an idyllic marriage, but they had rubbed along well enough. She had always known where she was with Eddie for he was totally predictable. Every day, every week, was identical with Eddie and that had a sort of security; it also had an overwhelming lack of excitement. Even his death had almost a text book quality about it.

They had been on holiday in Southport; they always went on holiday in Southport.

They had stayed at the same boarding house every year for twenty-five years.

"Mrs Mollins always makes you feel at home," Eddie used to say every year when he booked for the following year.

They had gone for their daily walk after lunch - "A breath of fresh air will do us good, dear". But, this time, when they were only half way along the front, Eddie did not feel so good and went back to Mrs Mollins' for a little lie down. When she went to wake him for the evening meal, he was dead; he had died in his sleep from a sudden heart attack.

She had stayed on in Southport to make the funeral arrangements and a few friends came down to console her on the day. But, suddenly, the sharer of her twenty-five year routine was gone.

She lived as if he had not and it was a strange life. She missed him as she got the meal or as she sat down to watch the television. She still woke up every morning in time to get his unvarying bacon and egg for breakfast with two slices of toast - not too well done, please! She looked at the wedding present clock at twenty past seven every weekday morning and waited to hear him say, as he always had, "Well, must be off to work now. That will leave just enough margin of error. Wouldn't do to be late, would it now?"

She still did her shopping every Thursday evening, going to the same supermarket