

Dotter of her Father's Eyes



Mary M Talbot
Bryan Talbot

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Mary M Talbot
Bryan Talbot



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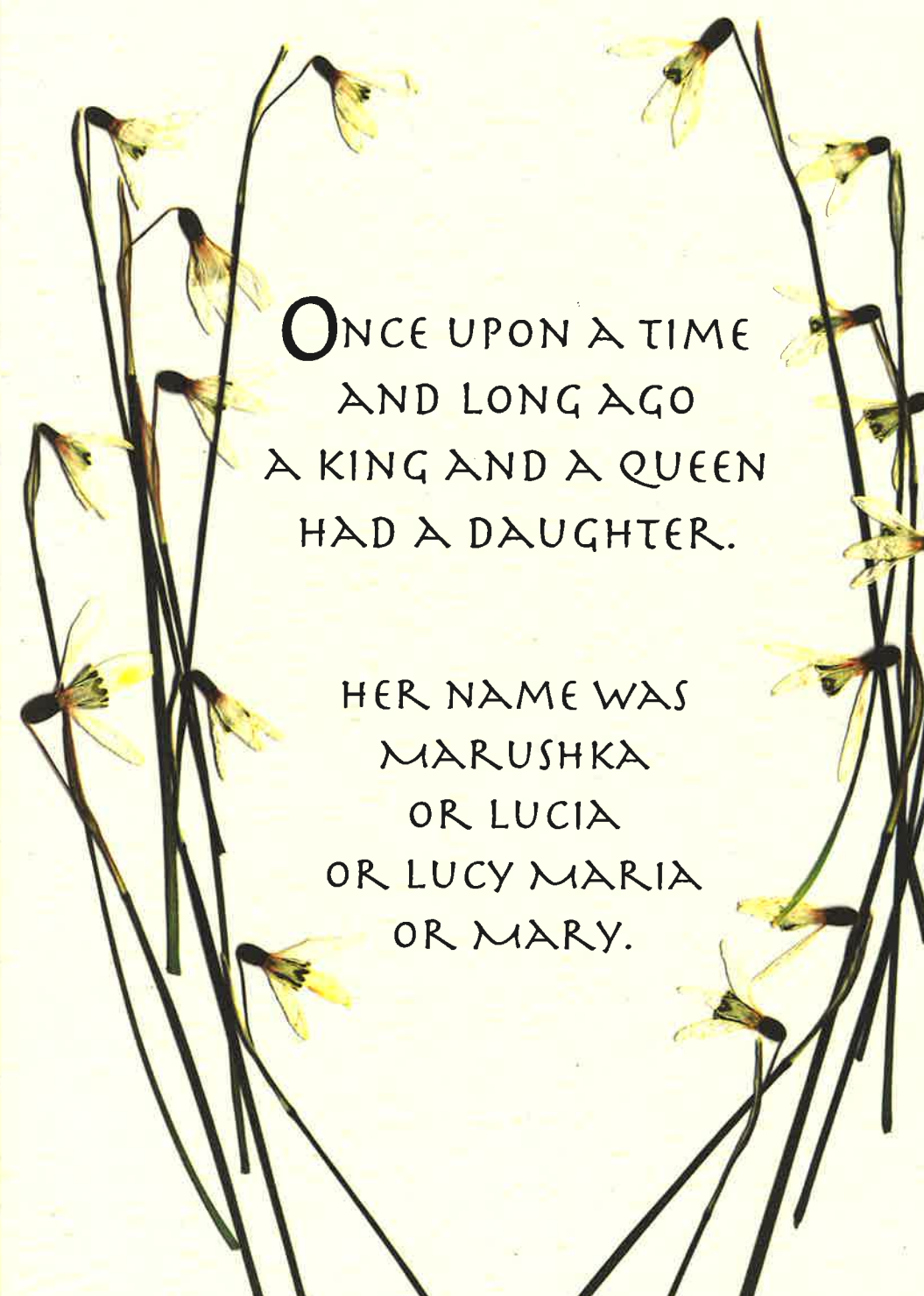
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To our granddotters:
Tabitha and Madeline

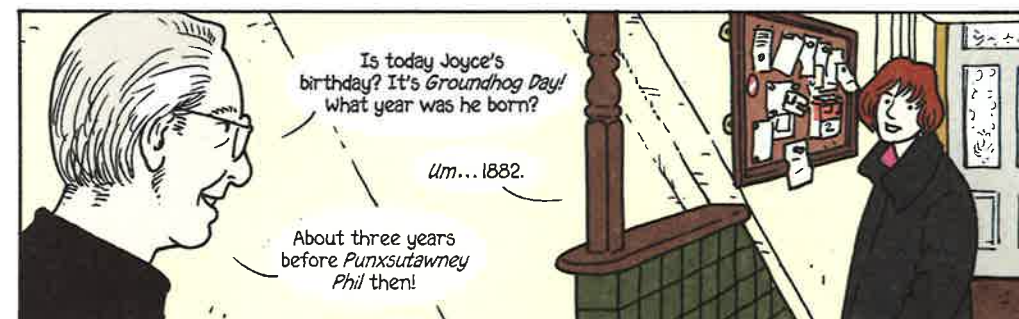
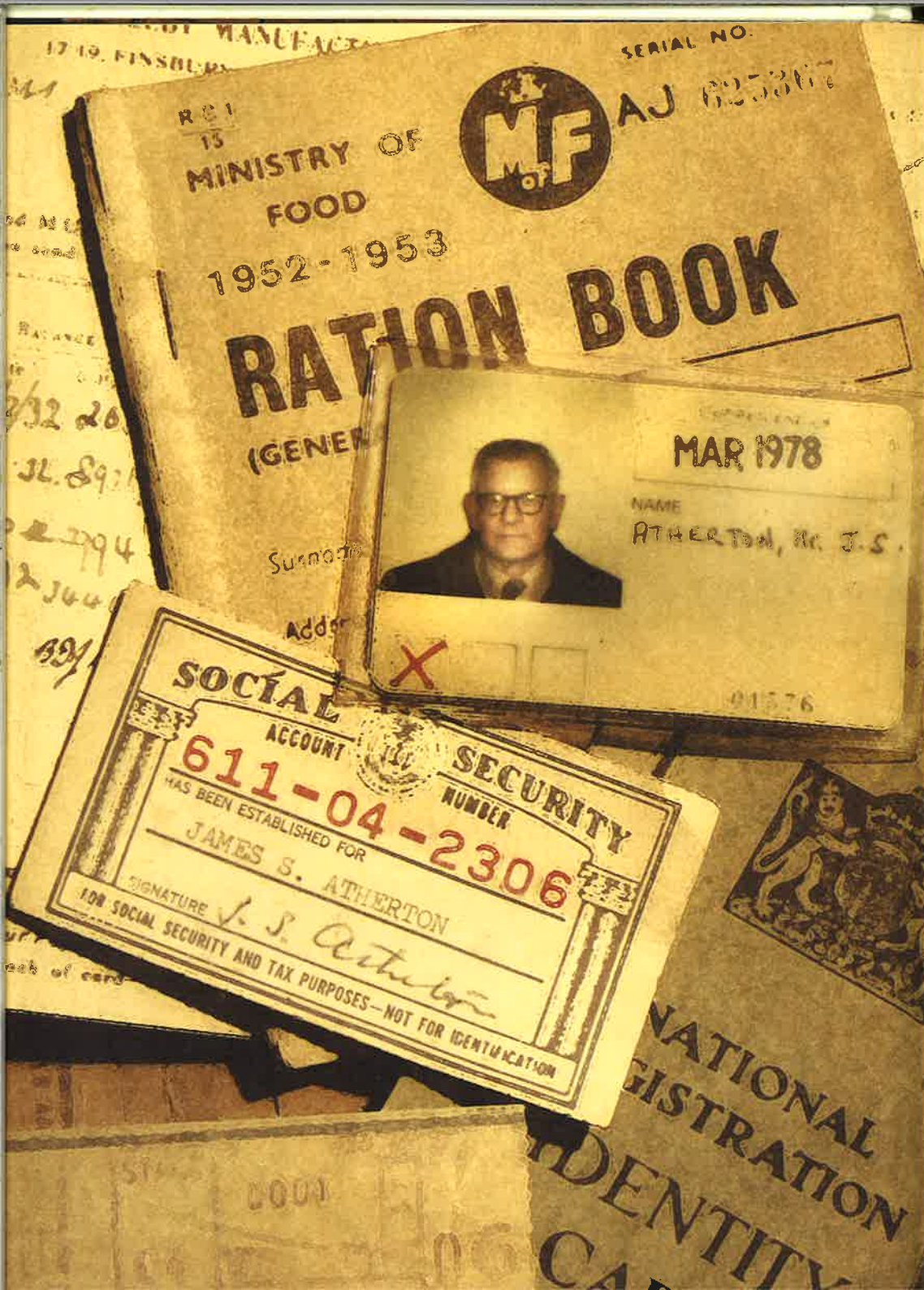
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ONCE UPON A TIME
AND LONG AGO
A KING AND A QUEEN
HAD A DAUGHTER.

HER NAME WAS
MARUSHKA
OR LUCIA
OR LUCY MARIA
OR MARY.





We weren't well off when I was small, but there was never a dull moment.



I was born in the year rationing ended, but resources were still scarce. One teacher's salary was barely enough to support us. That free orange juice from the NHS was precious stuff.



Our house.

My hands are cold!

Well, put them in your pockets!

Our dressing-up box was a bottom drawer.



Mummy, do I look good?

Oooh, lovely! That's Great Uncle Joe's military waistcoat you've got on.

I think his tummy was bigger than yours, wasn't it?

Mummy, mummy, look at me, too!

Do I look good too? Do I?



There was barely room for us all at the tea table in those days.

Elbows off the table, Stephen.

I'm not sure how often I actually ate at it, though.



Bleh!!!

Smelly poo poo!

Smelly poo poo you!

Michael! Stop it!

Shush!



Smelly poo poo you too!

RIGHT! That's enough! You're not fit to sit at the table! OUT!



I guess it all got a bit much for them.

That was the fifties for me: big brothers, unheated bedrooms, chilblains, smog, overcooked veg, no television, hand-me-downs...



...and getting into trouble.



What the devil are you doing? Stop that!



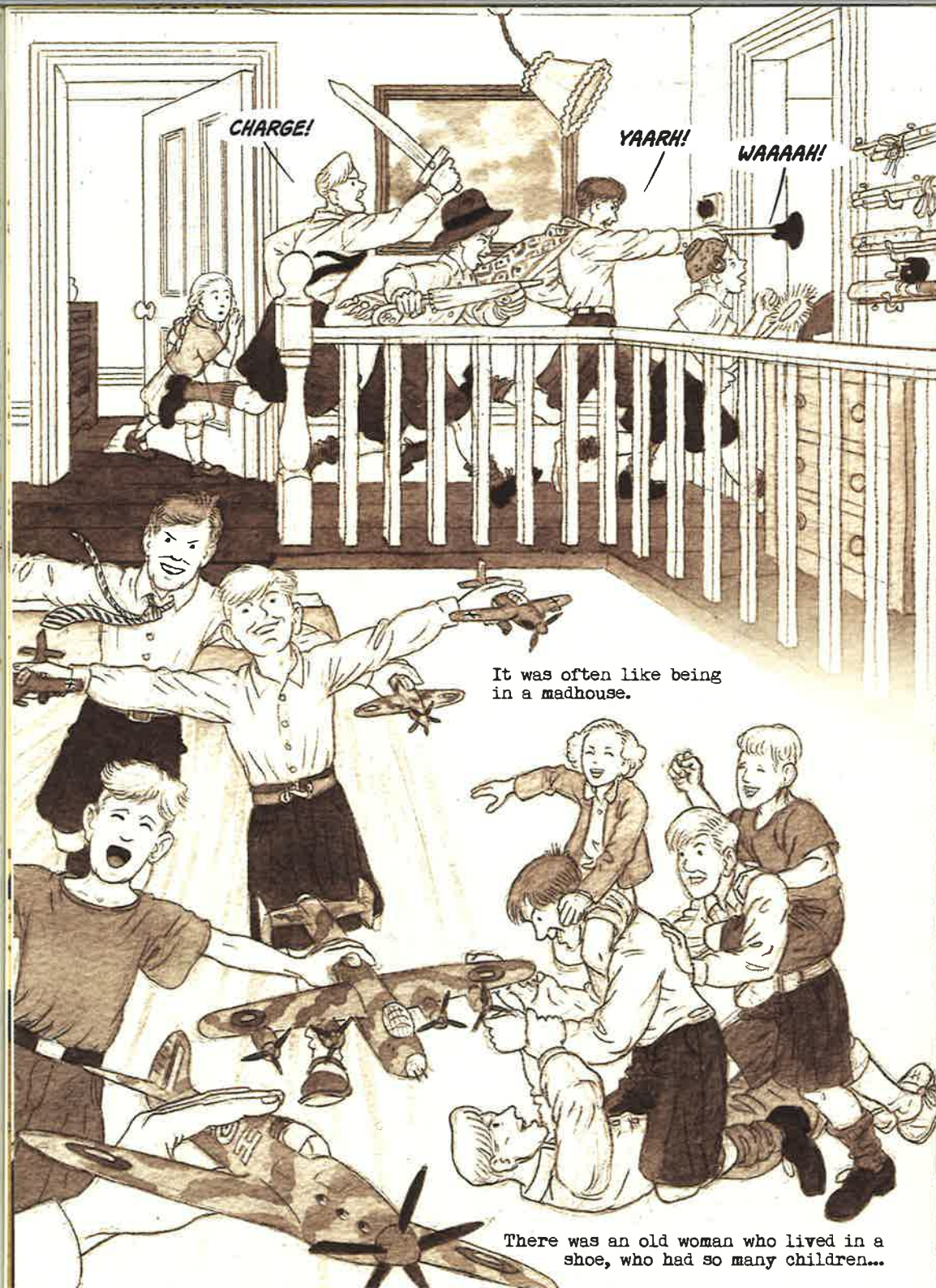
It wasn't me, it was Marjoram!

Rubbish! There is no Marjoram!



Sometimes my imaginary friend let me down.

SMACK!



CHARGE!

YAARH!

WAAAAH!

It was often like being
in a madhouse.

There was an old woman who lived in a
shoe, who had so many children...



Dad had a foul temper,
but it's sometimes
easy to see why he
was always blowing
his top.

CRASH!

And then it all changed.

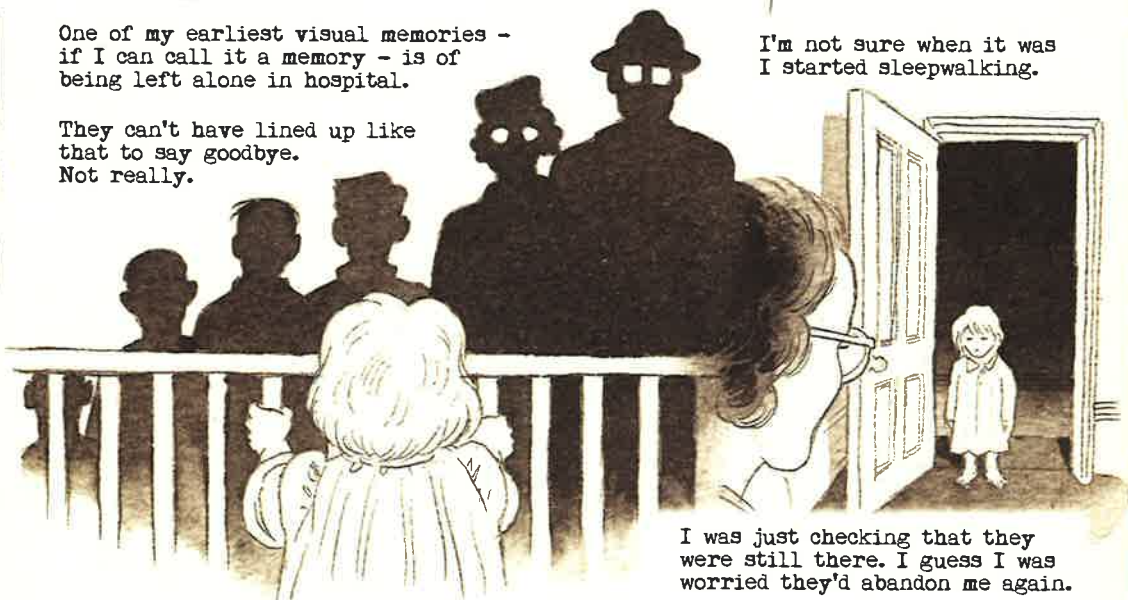
It seemed to happen all at once. Suddenly my brothers weren't there.



TAP TAP TAP TAP TAP TAP TAP

One of my earliest visual memories - if I can call it a memory - is of being left alone in hospital.

They can't have lined up like that to say goodbye. Not really.



I'm not sure when it was I started sleepwalking.

I was just checking that they were still there. I guess I was worried they'd abandon me again.

I was a nuisance at night for years.



Whatever's the matter?

I was having nightmares.



But you weren't asleep!

I must have driven them round the bend.



TAP TAP TAP TAP



TAP TAP TAP TAP TAP TAP TAP

Mum says tea's ready.

Mum took me to Blackpool once, just the two of us. It must have been a weekend holiday.



Mummy, Mummy, look! I've made the tram on the promenade!

I could sense she was making up for something.

Can I have one of those?



We never ate "shop biscuits" at home. Looking back on it, she'd been a full-time, ever-present mum for 18 years - and she'd just started teaching again. She must have been ridden with guilt. But we certainly needed the money.

I stayed with neighbours for an hour or so after school, until Mum finished work. Of the paying variety, that is. Of course, she worked a double shift.



Knife on the other side, dear.

The neighbours were only across the backs, but it was a different world.



Her mam and dad are both teachers, you know.

Ee, are they really?

She's a lovely lady is 'er mam.

I bet she had this 'un reading before she started school, 'er being a teacher.

Me? I'm drawing me pension, luv!

What do you do, Mrs Corless?



It was my first introduction to television...

...and chip butties.



I later discovered my dad had something against chips. He wouldn't have them in the house. It must have been something to do with social class. I guess they had bad associations for him. It was certainly nothing to do with health issues.

They've got a brand new bathroom, Mum, and it's downstairs!



Yes, dear, that's because it's only just been added. Ours was put in when the house was built.

It was clear that this was a sign of superior quality.

NB: My mother wouldn't have been seen dead in a frilly apron.

Part personal history, part biography, *Dotter of Her Father's Eyes* contrasts two coming-of-age narratives: that of Lucia, the daughter of James Joyce, and that of author Mary Talbot, daughter of the eminent Joycean scholar James S. Atherton. Social expectations and gender politics, thwarted ambitions and personal tragedy are played out against two contrasting historical backgrounds, poignantly evoked by the atmospheric visual storytelling of award-winning comic artist and graphic-novel pioneer Bryan Talbot. Produced through an intense collaboration seldom seen between writers and artists, *Dotter of Her Father's Eyes* is intelligent, funny and sad - a fine addition to the evolving genre of graphic memoir.

'Dotter of Her Father's Eyes is doubly enjoyable for writer Mary Talbot's masterful interweaving of two father-daughter relationships and cartoonist Bryan Talbot's equally brilliant drawings, which transported me back-and-forth between gritty post-war Britain and the swinging Paris of the '20s and '30s.

This is one of the best collaborative efforts I've seen in the comics medium.'

Joe Sacco — Author of *Palestine*, *Safe Area Gorazde* and *Footsteps in Gaza*

'A fascinating and original book, which will have wide appeal - not just to fathers and daughters!'

Jennifer Coates — Emeritus Professor of English Language and Linguistics at Roehampton University and Fellow of the English Association

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