

The Date

KARL is sitting in his bedroom. His laptop is placed in front of him. In this scene, he is speaking to his best friend, John, and trying to decide what he should do to unravel a mix-up he has created by trying to organise a date for his older sister, Melanie.

KARL: *(Looking at the computer)* How on earth can I get out of this? I can't believe what I have done? Fixed my sister up for a date with *Mr Lehman*. *Lehman* – our English teacher, I mean that is so... so... awful! He is *quite* young, I suppose, about thirty... and she's actually twenty-six – although her online profile said she was only twenty-two! But... urghhh... just the thought of it makes me feel sick... and it's all my fault!

(Moving towards the computer) It started out as a joke. I was so fed up with her moaning night after night that she was so lonely... so bored... and friendless since she moved back home. I said – well, why don't you make friends at work! That went down like a lead balloon! She works in a nursery! All the others are women and they're old enough to be her mother! Anyway – one of her old school friends said that she had met her boyfriend online... through this dating agency! That's when the fun began! You see, Mel created her profile. I read it. Well, it was sort of private, but I know her password... she doesn't know that... but I just worked it out. It was easy! She has this thing about a certain poet... Byron of all things... and an actor called Benedict! She even called her dog Byron and the cat Benedict! I don't always understand girls, do you? Anyway, I put the two names together and... Bingo! I could access her files!

(Turning the laptop on and accessing the site) Look! See how easy it is. *(Thoughtfully)* Perhaps I could become a hacker? I do seem to have a talent for this! *(Scanning Mel's profile)* Look, John. This sounds so much more interesting than her original description. Yes, well each person has to really make themselves sound irresistible to any boy – or, in her case – man – reading it! I kind of thought – I'll pretend that I am looking for a girlfriend and write a description of the sort of girl I would like to date! *(Moving away)* That was a

mistake. You see, she had written that she was a short, slim woman of twenty-two with short brown hair, brown eyes and a love of English Literature. She then went on to describe her Master's thesis on Byron! I mean – who is going to get excited about a very boring girl who likes Byron! I just altered it a *little*. I like tall, well-built blonde girls with blue eyes! So...I made her taller, bigger and blonder... Oh, and changed her eye colour too! I left the bit about Byron. I didn't feel I could change everything!

(Self-consciously) The next night, at supper, she was just so excited! "I've had a reply" she said, "someone wants to take me out! I didn't even know that I had posted it!" I couldn't tell her that I had! She went on to describe the man... his age... his interests... and, wait for it, his place of work! It was then that I knew exactly who he was! Lehman! *Mr Lehman!* They've arranged to meet up – go out for a meal! As if that wasn't bad enough... he'll think she tells lies! I mean... she doesn't look anything like the description I sent! What am I going to do?

by Anne Odden