L470S12.T15 Text 15

Gateshead Ivr: WL

**Margie Knott: Her Encounters with the Neighbors**

WL: Is this a friendly neighborhood?

MK: Well no neighborhood’s friendly unless you assert yourself.

 1 Well when we ﬁrst moved down here,

 eh–there was an old man livin’ next Qsdoor here,

 2 This is one–this is our experience, anyway.

 3 Well he died.

 4 We w’ only here a couple o’ month,

 5 An’ this old man died.

 6 So this family across here moved in.

 7 And they were–he wasn’t workin’,

 8 the man wasn’t workin’ at the time,

 9 Eh, an’ she had about ﬁve, ﬁve kids, hadn’ she?

 10 Allen was the oldest,

 11 An’ she had four girls, y’see.

 12 Well when they ﬁrst moved in,

 a thought, “Well a’ll be friendly,

 13 A’ll go over an as’, an’ ask–ask them,

 do they want anything at the shop.”

 14 So a went over that night, the same night they moved in,

 15 an’ for a few months we got on pretty well together, y’know.

 16 Fac’, we got on very well together.

 17 But, eh, one of our little–

 18 Well–one day in particular, anyway,

 things hadn’t been goin’ too well in the house,

 19 an’ my oldest boy was–’bout twelve something,

 20 an’ her oldest son was the same age, y’see.

 21 Well they always got on well together

 22 but my oldest boy was callin’ her boy “Guilty Girl” or something,

 23 A doan’ know what it was now, “Skinny” or something [hhh].

 24 He was at work.

 25 I was in here on me own.

 26 [h] Well she came out.

 27 Oh, you coulda heard her all over the road. . . y’know.

 28 So, eh, well a don’ know, a–a’m hot tempered, as they’ll tell you.

 29 A mean, a doan’ think.

 30 A never think.

 31 A’m straight in.

 32 An a remember distinctly a had a di–bench full o’dishes,

 because a had just washed them all.

 33 an’–a [hh] went into the back garden,

 34 she was in her back garden,

35 an’ a cleared the bench.

 36 She got the lot.

 37 So, now we couldn’ get to each other.

 38 So she says, “If a kin get me hands on ye, y’never–”

 39 You’ll have to inter–You’ll have to translate this

 40 “If a kin get me hands on ye, y’never–”

 41 A s’s, “Well, there’s a fron’ door!”

 42 A wen’ t’ the front door,

 43 an’ w’z stuck into it, y’see.

 44 [breath] He came in from work.

 45 A told ’m about i’ when ee came in from work.

 46 We never spoke to each other for weeks.

 47 But there was one day in particular.

 48 My son was crossing across these garages.

 49 An’ they all seemed to gang up on us, y’see.

 50 [Breath] An’ this lad nex’ door–

 51 ’e was about seventeen or eighteen–

 52 ’e says, “If ya doan’ get off them garages,

 a’ll smash y’neck.”

 53 Well eh–our Michæl told me a few weeks after.

 54 An a came up the street.

 55 An’ they were all sittin’ on the step.

 56 There was four of them:

 57 there was Evelyn,

 58 there was Mrs. Shaw–eh–Evelyn, Mrs–eh–Francis an’ her.

 59 She would tell you if she was in here.

 60 She’s jus’ left before you come in.

 61 [Breath] They were all sittin’ on the steps.

 62 So a s’s to Mrs. Francis, a says, “You tell your son,” a says,

 “If–anybody does any neck smashin’ around here, it’ll be me!”

 63 A says, “Tell ’im t’leave my son alone.”

 64 Well this one, who a had had the ﬁght with previously,

 she butted in.

 65 So a says, “You!”

 66 An’ a went to grab her, y’see.

 67 Now when he’ve looked it

 we were rollin’ in the street, weren’t we?

 68 Well, there was three of ’em had a hold o’ me!

 69 An’–eh–he separated we.

 70 Well a come in here,

 71 an a couldn’ settle.

 72 A says to him, a cou–a couldn’t gan to bed with ’er on my mind.

 73 A gets me coat on,

 74 A gans up for me mate that lived beside us, y’see,

 when a was little.

 75 A says, “Are ye gonna come doon

 an’ help may to sort this lot oot?”

 76 A says, “there’s only–there’s three of them,”

 77 an a says, “They’ve nearly killed me.”

 78 Oh she ons wi’ ’er coat, ’cause she’s a big lass, isn’ she?

 79 She sa–an’ me sester come doon,

 not that shay could day much,

 but she come.

 (Ronnie: It was one each, wa’n’ i’?)

 80 Well what i’–on equal ground y’see. (One each.)

 81 So-o we gets there–

 82 They’re all sittin’ on the stairs.

 83 [Hhhhh!] I’ was like a Western ﬁlm. [Hhhh!]

 84 But what got me– the men never showed their faces

 when they all had me.

 85 Nobody come out, did they? (No.)

 86 As soon as they seen may ’n’ June comin’ down th’ street,

 the men t’ the door.

 87 Well June come

 88 an’ June grabbed one i’ thim

 89 an’ a grabbed Enith.

 90 June–June grabbed Kathleen Francis,

 91 a grabbed Enith.

 92 Though they scattered! [hhhh]

 93 The men come oot, y’see?

 94 So–eh–a says, “No,” a says, “’cause we’re on equal ground

 ye–yiz have showed yi’ faces.”

 95 A sys, “These lot have nearly killed me!”

 96 So-o eh–ohh we were stuck into it.

 97 Though there was no t’morrow.

 98 The whole street was up in arm!

 99 A never spoke t’ thim for three year.

 100 It was all settled.

 101 June says, “If there’s any more carryin’ on, a’ll come doon.

 102 She’s not on ’er own, dinna think that,”

 103 she says, “She’s got plenty friends,”

 104 she s’s, “an’ if there’s any more bother, a’ll be back,” she says,

 105 “an’ we’ll sort it oot.”

 106 A never spoke t’ them for three year.

 107 An’ a wouldna spoke t’ thim t’ this dee

 108 They usta have street trips, didn’ they?

 109 They never invited me.

 110 A usta pass thim in the street.

 111 A never spoke to anybody for three year.

 112 Then one day they pulled us up in the street, didn’ wi’?

 113 This one here pulled us up in the street

 114 an’ she says, “Eh a’ don’t think it’s fair,” she says,

 because they have street trips here,

 an’ there’s nobody asks you.

 115 A says, “That’s quite all right.

 116 A don’t like trips in any case,” which a’ don’t.

 117 A says, “If a’ wanted to go t’ the seaside we’d go on we’ own!”

 118 She says, “A know,

 but y’ chil—that—the bairns would like t’go for the trip.”

 119 She says, “Why doan ye let thim go?”

 120 But that went over.

 121 an’ a’ says, “Oh, if they want t’ go,

 a’ can take them meself,” didn’ a’?”

 122 An’—one a’ still never spoke t’ thim.

 123 An’ then there was one day a’ was hangin’ a line in the bathroom.

 124 A’ hadn’ spoken to anybody around here.

 125 An’ a’ knocked through a gas pipe.

 126 Well the gas goes teemin’ oot.

 127 Well a’ couldn’t—move me hand off the gas pipe

 ’cause the gas was \*pourin’\* out

 128 an’ a didn’ know where the stop thing was for the gas.

 129 A’ was stuck wi’ one leg on the bath an one on the

 windasill wi’ me hand on the gas thing (hhhh)!

 130 “Look a’ tha’ twit on the window sill!”

 131 Well the women they were in the garden

 132 an’ one o’ them happened to look up

 133 an’ she says, “Are ye in trouble, Margaret?”

 134 “Not really, a’ve jis’ tear a gas main.”

 135 Well she coom’ in—she came in

 136 an’ she jis’ turned the gas off.

 137 An’ a’ came downstairs.

 138 an’—she jus’ sat down

 139 an’ ye’d jus’ think it had never been.

 (Everything was—)

 140 —was forgotten, wa’n’ it?

 141 An’ then of course we had the night ’e died.

 142 Her husban’ died over here.

 143 An’—we’ve been friendly ever since.

 144 An’ even now she’ll say, “A’ don’t know why it all started.”

 145 But the thing was

 if I hadna gone an’ defended meself when a’ did,

 well me life jus’ wouldna been worth livin’.

 146 Ye’ve got to go out an’ defend yourself

 because if you dont

 well, y’ might as well be dead.

 147 That’s all there is to it, y’know.

 148 They would lead you—a terrible life

 if you didn’t do that.

 149 A’m glad a’ did in a way.

 150 Now, mind, a’m—not so bad.

 151 A’ can control meself.

 152 But one time, a’ jus’ couldn’t.