

Trolley Dolly
An original story(first draft)
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Chapter 1

'I hate this place!' I shouted close to tears.

'How can you possibly hate this place you've only been here one day - you're being a little unfair don't you think?' Said my Mum calmly.

'Unfair!' 'Unfair! I don't bloody care!' I shouted as I stormed upstairs bursting into tears as I went, my Mum was now crying too. I went to my bedroom lay on my bed and sobbed so much that I made my pillow wet. I spoke out loud to myself 'I just can't bear it, I can't bear it' and I didn't feel that I could, because it was like pain that's on the inside and the outside at the same time. I had never sworn at my Mum before, never and I remember thinking while I was doing it not knowing why. I know now why, it was because of my Dad.

I was still thinking aloud it seemed to make more sense to get the words out even if no one else could hear them. 'We are only here in this place because my dad died, he just died and I will never see him again and we had to leave our house, and I've got to start my new school on Monday, my life is ruined' I said through my sobs and tears.

'Dolly, Dolly' my mum said as she gently knocked on my bedroom door.

'Don't call me that!' I shouted still crying.

You see my Dad called me that like a sort of nickname, my real name is Dorothy but he said Dolly suited me better and I didn't want anyone else to call me Dolly ever again.

I was just about to shout that, but was stopped by a knock on our back door which was followed by a woman's voice calling 'hello, hello anyone home' in that daft way people do it when they are looking for someone, sort of like a shout but not.

And I thought oh! That's all I need the old busybody from next door coming in to gloat over our misery. That's what people do isn't it they love it when things go wrong for other people and I'm sure our story will make for really good gossip in this village. A village, I thought, what could be worse on top of everything else? To live in a village in the countryside, Yorkshire for flips sake, who calls a village Draneol it sounds like a kitchen cleaning product. I hate my life, I really hate it.

'Would you come down a minute please?' my mum said. Like as if nothing had happened, so I go downstairs and there she is the old busybody Mrs Carter who lives in the cottage next to ours.

'I expect we'll be seeing a lot of each other' she says with a smile, and I think I doubt it love. She's one of those old ladies with the white hair a bit like a dandelion clock, round pinky slightly wrinkled face, about as tall as an average ten year old, you know the type.

'Well I just wanted to welcome you to the village always good to have young people around to give the village some life again,' she said as she handed my mum a jar of something which turned out to be jam.

'Who's this?' she said looking at me.

'This is Dolly..sorry, Dorothy' my Mum replied.

'Pleased to meet you Dorothy' the old biddy said and put her hand out, I shook it. I expected it to be old and leathery and maybe cold but it was warm and quite nice actually.

'There's a few young families moved in to the area over the past couple of years so there should be quite a few friends for you Dorothy' she said.

My Mum said 'that's good isn't Dolly?' Smiling at the old biddy.

Who in return said 'If you need to know anything about the village where to find things, what's on and things like that, then just let me know and I'll do what I can to point you in the right direction.'

My mum said 'Oh thank you very much' then this old busybody looked at my mum for what seemed like a long time, I thought maybe she's one of them old biddies who is losing her marbles.

Then she said 'I know you don't I?' My mum just smiled not quite knowing what to do and the old biddy says 'Karen... Karen Rodgers' my mum nodded and smiled, first time I'd seen her do that for weeks and weeks.

'Well its Davis now' my mum said.'

'But of course you got married didn't you, I saw your aunt Theresa just coming out of the tea shop in Eladseet oh must be five years ago now' but my mum's wasn't listening she started to cry again.

I thought look what you've done now you interfering old biddy, and then the old fossil put her hand on my mum's arm. 'I heard about that as well' she said and then walked towards the kitchen and said 'where's the kettle I'll make a cup of tea.'

I thought the cheek of it she's only been in our house for five minutes and she's making a cup of tea. 'C'mon Dorothy you can help me' she said.

I thought now she's ordering me around, but I went because I felt a bit bad about being so horrible to my Mum. But, I thought I can't help it I feel like being nasty because I feel nasty inside. I helped the old biddy make a cup of tea and then I went back up to my bedroom.

Chapter 2

I lay on my bed and thought about my dad and imagined him and me riding on mustang horses in Wyoming in America. I can see the huge cactus, we are rounding up steers and shouting to each other and laughing as we ride our horses fast. I've never been to America but my Dad had when he was younger, he told me so many stories about it and me and him talked about it so much and looked at so many brochures and read so many books about it that it almost felt as if I had been. That's why my middle name is Cheyenne, because he said I was as beautiful as the place

My Dad brought a brochure home about a dude ranch, that's where people go and you can be a cowboy for a week or two, or for as long as you want, you have to pay for it like a holiday, but it's just the best thing ever. I was saving up and my dad was saving up too. I researched cowboys, not the outlaw ones like Jesse James they were just horrible criminals, or gun fights or anything like that, I hate guns actually. I was interested in people who against a whole load of challenges succeeded in their goal. The real cowboys had wonderful skills, being able to ride really fast rope a steer and all that. A lot of people died with illness and accidents, but the ones who survived were really tough, they just kept working in all kinds of weather from really hot to freezing. My Dad bought me a lariat some people call them a lasso it's a rope that you swing round and try to get over a steer's head. I went to a course on how to do it at this horse show.

I got quite good and we were going to do to a rodeo when we went to America and my dad said I was good enough to be able to try and win a competition, but I hadn't practiced since my Dad.. you know.

I love horses, that's another thing about moving to Yorkshire I couldn't ride my pony Philly, well it wasn't really my pony it was owned by one of my Dad's customers, but I could ride her anytime I wanted. My Dad had a load of customers who liked him a lot, he was a carpenter that's someone who can make and fix things made out of wood. I've got a picture of my Dad lifting me onto Philly when I was little, I was so scared when I got on for the first time, and it felt so high up. Then I started to cry again because I just wanted my dad back.

Chapter 3

The next day it being a Saturday I decided to have a look around the village, my Mum had to go to work. I didn't tell you why we were in Yorkshire did I? Well it's a very simple story, my Dad died and my Mum couldn't afford to keep the house we had in the South. She got offered a job in this place because she grew up around here for some of the time, her dad my Granddad was in the army so they moved around a lot. She knows a lot of people and

when they found out about my Dad, Mr Riker who owns the big hotel and conference centre up the road offered her a job, and this cottage for a very cheap rent so that's why we came from the South to Yorkshire. My Mum said that I would have to get used to her working a lot because we needed the money. You see we had a house in the South and my mum and dad bought it when houses were really expensive, but when my Mum came to sell it turns out it was worth a lot less than they had paid for it because of the recession and credit crunch. So even though we didn't have the house any more we still owed the bank some money for it. Sounds crazy, but it was a huge pressure for my Mum, I didn't know at first but when I found her crying with bank statements on the kitchen table I made her tell me.

When we lived in the South I was used to going shopping on Saturday just being able to walk from our house, or if the weather was really bad we just hopped on a bus they came along every fifteen minutes. As I walked around the village I noticed that there wasn't even one shop, well there was one, but it was closed up, a fading note in the window apologised for having to close down, from the date I could see the note was over a year old. I went to the bus stop to find out the times of the buses at first I couldn't believe there was only one bus in the morning and one in the afternoon and none at all on Sundays, I thought I'm marooned. Oh I forgot to tell you we had to sell the car which is fine for my Mum being as she can walk or bike to work, but means I'm stuck in this village.

An old couple came out of one of the houses and walked towards the bus shelter they said 'good morning' to me and the old man raised his hat, as he did that he reminded he reminded me of one of the old timers in the cowboy films, you'll find out that I'm a bit obsessed with cowboy stuff. As I started to walk away I saw the old biddy Mrs whatsherface from next door coming over towards us she was talking to a boy who looked about the same age as me. He's the first young person I'd seen in the village. The old biddy says 'this is Lee' as she gently pushed him towards me 'and this is Dorothy' and he put his hand out and we shook and it was so embarrassing. He mumbled something which sounded like 'hi' and I did the same and then we just stood there until he said 'Mrs Carter I have to go and help my Mum now.'

And she said 'yes of course Lee don't forget to say hello to me for her'. As he walked away the old biddy said 'Dorothy your Mum is going to be working late tonight so I'll be cooking your tea' I was gobsmacked just who did she think she was. 'I'll be fine thanks I can cook for myself' I replied.

She said 'your Mum said you'd say that but she said to tell you really wants you to have a proper cooked tea.'

So I thought OK if that's how she wants to play it, best get it over with she might ask me this one time, but if I play my cards right it'll be the first and last time she asks me.

'Ok Mrs Carter that would be good thanks, what time?' I said.

'Half past five.'

Chapter 4

So at 5.30 exactly I was standing outside her front door having knocked, and now trying to look in through the window when she opened the door and waved me in to the hall. It wasn't what I expected, I sort of thought it would be like a museum these old people's houses usually have an old people's smell a bit like a charity shop. But it wasn't like that at all, even in the hall it smelled lovely like pine fresh and the smell of food coming from the kitchen was even better.

'She took my coat hung it up and said 'come through' as she led me into a room with a very posh sofa and an old fashioned book case with loads of books on the shelves.

She must have noticed me sniffing, 'vegetarian lasagne chips and peas alright? I can do you something else if it isn't' she said.

'No, it's my favourite' I said, then I realised my Mum must have told her, we both smiled. She had a really lovely smile I hadn't notice that before.

'Go through to the back room and we'll have something to drink and get to know each other a bit better.' I sat down on the really comfy sofa and she brought me a glass of cola with ice and lemon in it, delicious.

'Just waiting for the chips, your Mum tells me you like them nice and crispy' she said.

I just nodded. '

'Your Mum told me about your Dad and why you have moved up here.'

I thought oh brilliant, now she knows all my business she'll probably want to give me some sympathy and say what lots of other people have said' you're young, you'll get over it, your Mum will find someone else' blah, blah, blah. I promised myself if she said any of those things I'll scream and scam. But she didn't say any of those things in fact she didn't say anything at all. She just sat there looking relaxed and smiling nicely and a few more minutes went by with her not saying anything and I started to feel a bit weird and before I could stop myself I started to speak to her.

I noticed she had loads of photographs in frames on the walls, the sideboard and on the mantelpiece above the fireplace. Most of them were old and black and white. One in particular caught my eye it was a man in uniform wearing some medals. The old biddy saw me looking and said proudly 'that's Leading Seaman Harry Jarvis.'

I said 'he looks very smart.'

She said 'he was.'

I noticed her eyes looked a little bit teary, and then she said 'that's my Dad' and I was stuck for a minute because you don't expect people as old as her to talk about their Dad, do you?

I said 'was he in a war?'

She said 'yes he was, the second world war do you know anything about it?'

I nodded and said 'we did it at my last school.'

'Did you do anything about the Navy?' she asked and I told her we had watched a DVD about the North Atlantic and U boats.

'What was he like? I asked.'

'I don't know, never really met him, my mother said he cradled me in his arms when I was a baby but I don't remember it of course' she said.

'You never met him!'

'No I was born in 1940 the year after the war broke out and before I was a year old my dad had been killed. His ship went down off the coast of France with all the men on it. No one ever saw any of them again.'

The tears in her eyes were now starting to run down her face, she saw me looking and smiled as she wiped them away with a tissue and said 'it still hurts even after all this time, but thankfully the human heart has a great capacity for joy as well as pain.'

I don't know why but I felt it was alright to talk to her 'Why did our dads die and other peoples don't?' I asked

'No one knows Dolly and that's the truth of it, people think that science, universities and even television experts can answer every question that life throws up and they can't and when that happens people get worried and blame themselves instead of the so called experts.'

I nodded I'd watched some of them programmes and the advice of the so called experts never seemed to work.

'Some people think the answer is in religion what ever God they follow, some people think it is in the stars. Some people think we'll never know and that's probably a good thing to think, a mystery of life, like love. If you're that way inclined we have a lovely church in the next village, it's a place where you can sit and think and pray if you want, the priest Father Peter is a lovely man, he does a lot of community work, he's very easy to talk to.'

I started to cry at this point, but unlike most people she didn't try to stop me crying, even when my crying turned into sobbing she just handed me a tissue and carried on talking and I felt sort of normal.

'Ever talk to your mum about when she first met your dad and if she liked him at first or if it took time and why she liked him and why they had so much love for each other that they brought you into the world?'

That was a long question, I just shook my head in reply.

'Maybe you should' she said and I decided that I would.

Chapter 5

The next day being Sunday my Mum had to work again but she didn't start until 12 noon so we had the chance to have a sort of brunch together.

She asked me quite nervously 'how was your tea last night at Mrs Carter's?' I guess she thought I was going to blow up or moan about it.

I just told the truth about how I'd enjoyed it and had a good chat with Mrs Carter. My Mum looked a bit shocked and said but....

... I said 'it was good and I'm going again on Tuesday.'

I thought about what Mrs Carter had said and plucked up the courage to ask my Mum about my Dad. 'When you first met my Dad did you like him straight away or did it take a while?' My Mum looked shocked again but acted like she wasn't and stammered 'I,.. I..', and she must have realised that it was important to me so she said. 'Well I liked the look of him from a distance'..

..'You mean you fancied him' I said.

My Mum blushed a little bit.... 'Yes if you like..'

..'And then what' I said.

'Then I met him and I went off him a bit because he seemed such a show off' my Mum had tears in her eyes but she was smiling as well 'but I found out later that he was only showing off to impress me..'

'And' ... I said.

And... we got to know each other a bit more and then he went back to New Zealand and we realised that we missed each other too much and he came back to England' my Mum said.

Then me and my Mum hugged and it felt really brilliant.

Looking out of the window later, I saw Mrs Carter all dressed up wearing one of those old fashioned hats like the queen wears, she was walking towards the house; when she saw me

and she waved and I waved back I realised that she'd probably been to church. Rather her than me I thought, I'd only been to church once, it was freezing cold and the vicar priest person talked about doing bad things and getting into serious trouble with God for them.

On Monday I started school which was OK; there were quite a few other people with similar accents to me, whose parents had moved up to Yorkshire with their work. I was 'looked after' as my form tutor put it on the first day by this tall red headed girl called Louise who was really nice, a bit bonkers but really funny and seemed to know almost everyone in school. We got on really well. There was also a really nice teaching assistant called Mas who told me all about her dancing lessons and her dodgy knee she was nice and funny. So that was school sorted.

Chapter 6

School wasn't really sorted I still had to work hard to fit in and get the hang of some different stuff and do homework and all the other thousands of things adults don't realise you have to do when you are at secondary school, but it was manageable.

I was getting on great with Mrs Carter, she told me that I'd given her a challenge me being a vegetarian and she'd got a number of cook books from the library especially. Her food was brilliant, so good that you could even eat the leftovers next day for lunch even cold. I'd seriously had to change my view of her and besides the more time I spent with her the less she looked old if that makes sense, I didn't understand it either.

We talked all the time about our dad's and I started to feel a bit better about everything, but there was still the problem of money. Everyone needs money right? But teenagers we need it more than most people and that was my problem I didn't have any, my Mum kept offering me pocket money, but I knew she couldn't afford it and I know a lot of people think young people 'just take, take, take' not all of us. I couldn't take money off my mum. I needed a job, back in my old town there was always lots of jobs, helping people out, sweeping up in shops, washing up in restaurants, but what chance did I have here in this place, there wasn't a restaurant and the only shop was shut down. I thought of asking my Mum if there was any jobs going at her place, but she had come home and told me that all of the adults up there were working hard to try and keep their jobs. because the recession had meant less customers and less work, so that wasn't an option. I was just about to resign myself to being skint forever, when I heard my dad's voice in my head speaking in the American accent we both used to put on for fun. He was saying 'Hey podnah don't you dare give up there's steers to be roped'. I laughed out loud I said back to my dad 'Ok podnah, I'm on it I'll have em

corralled by sunset and we'll eat beans.' I talked to my dad like this a lot more since meeting Mrs Carter, it hurt a bit and I usually had tears in my eyes, but it was a happy thing too.

'A penny for em eh love' my Mum said as she came into the room.

I said 'what?'

She said 'you were miles away there day dreaming again.. Something nice?'

I nodded

'Good you certainly seem to be settling in here, I'm glad, now lets have some tea eh, beans on toast and this time lets go mad and have a sprinkling of cheese.'

Chapter 7

As a result of the the slow-down in bookings up at the conference centre my mum was spending even more time at work trying to drum up more business and keep hold of the customers they had, which also meant I was spending more time with Mrs Carter, which was good, but I was missing having friends of my own age, she even pointed it out. Which is how clever old Mrs Carter managed to put me and Lee together, don't get the wrong idea, I don't mean together as in 'boyfriend together', errrrghh. Let me explain; Mrs Carter and me had just watched a cowboy film, yes it was old and completely false, but it was fun as well and I told her all about my plans to go Wyoming and how I'd been practicing with my roping skills, she asked me if I brought the rope with me. I told her I had even though I'd never used it since my dad died, it just seemed wrong. She told me she'd love to see a demonstration and I promised I'd bring it round but that I'd need a lot of space. She then asked me how things were going with my mum and I told her better, which they were and I also told her how she had helped get us talking again. Then I said 'you asked me to ask my mum a question about my dad, can I ask you about your dad?' She said I could so I carried on and said 'tell me something funny about him.'

She took her glasses off and put them away in their case and went to the old wooden sideboard and brought back an envelope, 'read this' she said as she handed me an old faded beige envelope, which looked like something you would see in a museum behind a glass case.

'Go on' she said, 'it's a letter from my dad to my mother'.

I stood there holding the envelope and she started to talk and it was almost as if she'd drifted off to the past.

'I can't remember seeing him but he saw me as a baby, he came home on leave and the first time he picked me up I was sick all over him, he thought it was funny'.

I took the letter out of the envelope and started to read it. He was a really good writer describing where he was and what type of food they were eating and telling Mrs Carter's mother not to worry that he would look after himself.

It was really sad and I started crying again and Mrs Carter joined in by crying too. 'It's therapeutic crying you know' she said, 'scientists have proven it' and we both laughed and cried at the same time.

She got us both a drink and she started talking to me about her dad's death. 'It was very hard for my mother she was left with three children and no husband; there wasn't all the benefits and things that you have these days. My mother did all sorts of work anything she could to earn money and when we were old enough we helped out working on the farms picking potatoes anything. Collecting jam jars..'

'..Jam jars!' I said.

'Yes' she said laughing 'it must sound funny to you now but after the war jam jars were valuable and if you knew the right people to sell them to you could make good money, bought all our winter clothes one year. Tommy Murphy showed me how to do that, he's a lovely man you'll meet him at some point, he'll be around this way in the next few weeks; mind you he's had his troubles too. I just looked blankly at her and she gave me a brief history of her friend Tommy, he was what was known as a rag and bone man, a person who collected old things that people didn't want any more, old clothes, furniture, old metal all of which he sorted through and then sold. When he wasn't doing that he would work on the farms, doing any job the farmers wanted, he was also a brilliant horse trainer so he did that as well. He and his family had horse drawn vehicles a caravan and a couple of carts and tents which they lived in when they were on the move. They started from further up north and travelled all spring, summer and autumn until they went back home for the winter.

'A horse trainer' I said, 'I would really like to meet him; I love horses.'

'Ah well that could be arranged' Mrs Carter replied, 'Just as long as you show me that lassoing.'

I got up and said 'I'll go and get it now if you want, do you have an old chair or something that I can throw at?'

I went back home to get my lasso, it was in a bag under my bed, as soon as I picked it up I felt tears come into my eyes because I was thinking about my dad and how he'd never be going to America again, but I also realised I had to go and do this for Mrs Carter, I also thought there must be a better name I can call her than Mrs Carter all the time, I'd have to ask my mum or even better Mrs Carter, that cheered me up. When I got back to Mrs Carter's I went round the back into the garden where she'd put an old chair out. I stood about 6 or 7 metres away got my rope ready and was just psyching myself up for a throw when the front doorbell went. We both laughed Mrs Carter said 'don't worry I'll go and see who it is be back in a jiffy.' They do say some funny things older people, what on earth is a jiffy? I heard voices then Mrs Carter walked aback out into the garden with that boy Lee in tow. 'Look who it is' said Mrs Carter, 'Lee was just dropping something off for me and I invited

him to come and watch, I hope you don't mind'. Now two people watching me, no pressure there then, I just settled myself, remembered what my dad and the rope trainer had said and just threw like I'd been taught, everything seemed to go into slow motion, then Mrs Carter and Lee were clapping and the rope was over the chair.

'Wow' said Lee 'that was impressive.'

Yes it was' Mrs Carter agreed clapping her hands and laughing. We spent the next 20 minutes me throwing the rope and trying to give them both an idea of how it works and then they had a go. Mrs Carter brought us a drink out and we all chatted. I told them that the rope was actually called a lariat but most people called it a lasso. Lee said he'd like me to teach him how to throw the rope properly, I offered to teach him what I could, but that we need more space to do it, no problem according to him there was a place just outside the village that had lots of room and plenty of things to lasoo.

Chapter 8

Lee and I met at the bus stop and walked out of the village towards the place he called the Dell and we talked as we walked, I realised I didn't know that much about him or him about me. He told me about his family, his mum and dad both of whom worked in the health service, but he said he definitely didn't want to be a doctor or anything like that, he wanted to be an entrepreneur, a businessman He told me that he sold sweets and cold drinks in the summer from the garage in front of his house, to the tourists who passed through on their way to the conference centre when they had special events like the flower show. My mum even mentioned how massive that event was.

I asked Lee where he bought the drinks and snacks from and how much money he made, he said he got them from the supermarket and he could make up to £45 on a busy day. Now it was my turn to be impressed, 'I could do with making some money like that' I said.

He told me he'd help me if he could, by the time we'd discussed all of that we were in the Dell, which was a small valley with footpaths going through it, there was lots of big trees two of them had rope swings hanging from them. There was a flat piece of grass which looked like the kind of place where people would exercise their dogs. At the edge of that also surrounded by trees on one side and a bridge at one end was a small lake, it was lovely and the only thing spoiling it was that there was three supermarket shopping trolleys and a bike sticking up out of the water. Lee appeared to read my thoughts he said 'Sorry about the mess, I don't know why but some people just seem to use the Dell as a tip, it really winds me up'.

I nodded then said 'why don't the council come and clear it up especially the trolleys'.

Lee said 'they do sometimes but then it just happens again and then it was before you came, but there was a big argument between the council and the supermarket about who was responsible to move the trolleys mainly because it takes so long to get them out they need

special equipment, It cost over £1000 to get two of them out last time. Enough about that, let's have a go at throwing that lasso of yours.'

We found an old tree stump, Dutch Elm disease Lee informed me, 'had to cut it down'. 'You're a mine of information, some of it is even interesting' I said, luckily he laughed.

We took turns throwing my rope, he was definitely getting better by the time we had a rest. We were just sitting on the grass looking at the water, when Lee said 'Hey I bet you can't get your rope round one of them trolleys.'

'Bet I can' I said rising to the challenge.

So we stood at the edge of the water, (if you're reading this mum I was at a safe distance OK), I twirled the rope and threw it and it went plop as it landed about half a metre away from the nearest trolley, this was tricky, so I tried again focusing more on the trolley and again I missed. I was starting to get annoyed but then I heard my dad's voice saying 'take your time, focus, you can do it Podnah.'

I spun and threw again and this time the rope went over the handle of the trolley, I pulled and it tightened and the trolley started to slowly rise out of the water. Lee cheered and clapped his hands and I said 'don't just stand there give me a hand'. And we both pulled the trolley towards us, it was hard work as it was covered in twigs and some plastic. We high fived each other and then as we tried to get our breath back, we looked at the trolley lying on the ground dripping wet and then at each other both now wondering what we were going to do with it.