

Late evening.

Edith is in bed.

'Primrose Appleby. I am sure John said it was the boyfriend's mother who rang.

'Perhaps he and Caroline have the same surname. Perhaps they are related maybe not cousins or second cousins, but more distant. Maybe they happened to be in an alphabetically ordered queue or list and got talking because they had the same name.

'But maybe John got it wrong no but then he was only repeating what Caroline had said.

'Maybe his mother had rang Caroline's mother and Primrose Appleby is Caroline's mother and she relayed the message.

'Or her sister or her aunt or her cousin or her sister-in-law.

'But Caroline is very precise so would have said so. But she was under stress, so but no

'Maybe Caroline changed her name by deed poll on what would have been their wedding day. John did say her third given name looked like a surname. Maybe what are now her three given names are her birth name, so that her original birth certificate name, which would be on her certificates, is conserved. I never asked to see her degree certificate but I got that reference from her tutor, maybe he used her new name.

'It would explain why she would not accept the lunch invitation from David Evans so she was not annoyed that he went to lunch with me. And why she would not join in the dancing perhaps she remembers dancing with her boyfriend and just wants that memory of dancing but that could apply even if she has not changed her name.

'It is puzzling but if they had different surnames then they could still be related. If they did have different surnames it would not have occurred to me that they might be cousins I suppose that on average most people's cousins would have a different surname. So what are the chances of someone's cousin having the same surname but that would be at birth, if a female cousin with the same name at birth got married then her surname would change unless she decided not to change it or married a man with the same name or persuaded him to change his name to hers, it does sometimes happen.

'But I am getting fanciful whatever it is might become clear at some time. Even if it doesn't then it doesn't really matter.

'But it is puzzling.

'No, think about something else or I'll never get to sleep.'

Edith starts to think about buying some flower seeds for her garden some hollyhocks and some of those tall delphiniums ... and - and Edith drifts off to sleep.