

E. A. MARKHAM

The Good-looking Guy with the Glass

Why you all get taken in by this Harriet?

We weren't taken in by Harriet, we just liked her style. Not that there was anything flashy about Harriet, that's the point; her style was sparse, minimal, which suggested, if anything, the general move away from clutter, from refugeeness: *Not that we're accusing anyone we know of being a refugee.* And since she had only one sister, and that didn't suggest a childhood surrounded by chaos and noise, kids screaming all over the place, competing for the parents' attention, Harriet's style wasn't that easy to explain. *Her parents' attention?*

What parents? my sister asked.

OK. The mother. For the mother's attention. (For the father, like a father, was often away from home.)

But Harriet was usual wt(e a) T4 Tc 0.000g po(t)-7.g f TD 0G[(o6ft)7141414.1(e)10.8(w23u41414

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at weekends they avoided quality time with the family, by heading for the pub or betting shop. Or hijacking the sitting-room for the worship of foo the

There were rougher types from the islands, that we all knew, whose photos caused us less of a problem. These crude fellows from the country would all make sure they ended up living in the capital city abroad, as if that conferred a sort of legitimacy. One of those fellows—to come back to Harriet’s picture—would have taken a little bit of the gold from the chain on his arm and put it into his mouth; he would have got someone to coat his teeth with it. Just one tooth, perhaps. To show style. And of course the drink, the drink in the hand would not be white wine.

That night in question, when the guests had gone Harriet resolved to write to the dad: “I am very well and happy.” That’s how she would start the letter.

In Canada, Harriet’s dad was thinki

But then again, he could leave things as th