

### **In the beginning:**

In my school holidays often I went to my aunt and uncle in Beverwijk. There was living a nice guy. But he was not Roman Catholic and a sailor. My parents did not permit it. But what to do when you are in love. Secretly the contact was continued by correspondence. We used my sister's address who was already married and lived in Beverwijk. Regularly I therefore frequented Beverwijk. For a while it went this way until my sister made a mistake in speaking and my parents understood what was going on. Normally my parents never were very angry to me, but this time they were upset. I never saw my father so angry.

But the storm went over. The boy went to the sea for six months and I forgot about him.

Together with a girl friend I frequented in that time a dancing in Castricum. There I met Joop who was very nice, but, ten years older. I was just sixteen. What to do with such an old man!!!!

My aunt in Beverwijk knew about it and informed my parents. They talked to me, Joop was rooted in a good catholic family, much better for me than a protestant sailor and during the Kermis in my father's birthplace Egmond Binnen our love relation really started.

### **Growth:**

I have never regretted it. After my acquaintance with Joop I understood that he was very nice. I begun to love him and the difference in age was no problem any more. On my 18<sup>th</sup> we nicely celebrated our engagement. We married because we could get a house from Hoogovens where Joop was working. Living together and not being married was no option.

Years were passing and the birth of our three children were highlights and our relation became always stronger. The care together for the children and also the love and care for each other.

### **Development:**

The relation became stronger, we respected each other and understood at once what the other wanted to say.

There were differences of opinion of course, but the talking about these differences afterwards was very nice.

But Joop became ill. An illness made it impossible for him to work. He was rejected for work. And so we changed our roles in the family. He stayed at home and I was searching for a job in the office for five days.

Joop had an aim. In his good days he could manage the house and the financial situation did not become worse. And there was no shortcoming for the children.

### **Lost:**

It went in this way for ten years. Almost the three children were not home anymore. The eldest son lived with his girl friend together, the second son went to the police school and my daughters house was almost ready.

Then came the catastrophe. Cancer was perceived in Joops body. It became some difficult months with a few weeks drifting apart.

I could not talk with Joop. He denied his cancer and said that it was not that bad. With an operation he believed to become ok again.

In that awful time we got very conscious about the existence of life and death.

On the same day we heard that we were going to be grandfather and grandmother of our first grandchild and that Joop had a short time to live.

He got an enormous power. He wanted to see his grandchild. But that lasted for a short time and we knew better.

Then the doctor intervened. He did not permit us during one weekend to have visitors. We talked together and our strong relation came back.

My daughter and I cared for him with a love and also the two sons were a big help. All the time of this illness we lived in intoxication. We caught any straw that we saw, hopeful for improvement.

But after three difficult months you stay alone. Your husband, your mate and friend and lover is not any more en you have to go on.

With the help of our children, family and friends and my colleges I succeeded. But it was very difficult.

When you are young you have expectations and dreams. Some will be realized. Others not. The dreams of my youth are not realized, my life took another path. I dreamt of learning, an own business in the design and making of clothes, but of being married on my 19<sup>th</sup> and one year later a child. But so it was. I have experienced the love of a nice husband, I got three children en three grand children. I get all the love from them now. I have a good life and I can enjoy it every day.

Tiny Klaver