

# Once A Catholic

Mary O'Malley

*While Mary McGinty, one of the more sophisticated members of The Convent of Our Lady of Fatima's 5th Form, is on a school trip, her boyfriend, Derek, gets involved with the less attractive, rather innocent Mary Mooney. In this scene, Derek, a tall thin Teddy boy in his late teens, is pacing up and down, smoking, trying to explain himself to Mary McGinty. The scene takes place in Derek's house, somewhere in the Willesden area of London, in 1977.*

**DEREK.** Look I've told you a hundred times, she didn't mean nothing. And I didn't do nothing neither. Nothing much anyway. I mean, be fair. She come up and spoke to me in the street. I never knew her from Old Mother Hubbard, did I? You know how it is when I get me attacks of neuralgia. My eyesight gets affected, don't it. I couldn't make out what she looked like in the street. She could have been a really beautiful bird for all I knew. When I got her inside the house and see what she really looked like I had to draw the curtains double quick. I should have known that was asking for trouble, though, 'cos once you're in the dark with somebody it might just as well be anybody, you know how it is. Oh, no, you don't, of course. Well I'm only human, know what I mean? Not like you. No. You're about as warm as a Lyons choc ice you are, darling. It's about bleedin' time you faced up to the fact that I've been impairing me capabilities for the sake of respecting you. It's a wonder I ain't done myself some sort of permanent mischief. Not that I get any credit for it, oh no. It's all been a bleedin' waste of time. It's quite obvious you don't wanna go out with me no more. You don't have to say it.

I'm going by the way you're acting towards me. I mean, I don't go looking for it, darling. But if it happens to come my way . . . I can't very well help myself, can I? And who in this world would blame me the way you behave towards me. You know my old Nan was half Italian, don't you?