



## MID-LIFE STRIFE AND CYBERSPACE

When Marianne Hayward's marriage begins to fall apart, she finds herself trying to track down a schoolgirl crush... *Meeting Lydia* by Linda MacDonald looks at the psychology of relationships from the perspective of a woman in turmoil

**“Edward Harvey. Even thinking his name made her tingle with half-remembered childlike giddiness. Edward Harvey, the only one from Brocklebank to whom she might write if she found him.”**

Marianne Hayward, teacher of psychology and compulsive analyser of the human condition, is hormonally unhinged. The first seven years of her education were spent at a boys' prep school, Brocklebank Hall, where she was relentlessly bullied. From the start, she was weak and frightened and easy prey for Barnaby Sproat and his gang. Only one boy was never horrible to her: the clever and enigmatic Edward Harvey, on whom she developed her first crush.

Now 46, when Marianne finds her charming husband in the kitchen talking to the glamorous Charmaine, her childhood insecurities resurface and their once-happy marriage begins to slide. Teenage daughter Holly persuades her to join Friends Reunited, which results in both fearful and nostalgic memories of prep school as Marianne wonders what has become of the bullies and of Edward Harvey. Frantic to repair her marriage, yet rendered snappy and temperamental by her plummeting hormones, her attempts towards reconciliation fail. The answer to all her problems could lie in finding Edward again... But what would happen if she found what she seeks?

Author Linda is inspired by Margaret Atwood, Fay Weldon and David Lodge. “I had long wanted to write a book about bullying and its effects on later life, but I didn't have a plot. Friends Reunited first began to gain momentum in around 2001, at a time when anti-bullying campaigns were in the media. The potential for a connection between the two was compelling and the idea for *Meeting Lydia* began to unfold,” she explains.

### **About the Author:**

Linda was born and brought up in Cockermouth, Cumbria. She has a degree in psychology and a PGCE in biology and science. She is a part-time teacher of Psychology at a Sixth Form College and lives in Beckenham, Kent.



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