

Chapter one

Sunnyside up?

That will be just fine said Harry, putting down his newspaper.

Bacon tomato and hashbrown? asked the waitress
Just a couple of rashers of ~~bacon~~ ^{but nothing else} said Harry
And how do you like your coffee sir?

Black

The waitress made a note on her little pad, and hurried away.

Harry picked up ^{Black} his copy of the New York Times, and thumbed through the ~~pages~~ ^{articles} hoping to find a review of his latest novel, only to ~~find~~ ^{discover} that it was X X that had captured their attention. However ~~the~~ ^{the} reviewer wasn't convinced it was Graham Green's ~~best~~ ^{finest} work.

Harry turned another page and began reading a 'soup' review for the latest musical to hit Broadway. X X assured his readers that New Yorkers were about to experience a long love affair with Julie Andrews and Rex Hamilton, the stars of My Fair Lady.

Harry glanced up to see the waitress hurrying towards him, but she was not carrying a plate of eggs and bacon, or even a pot of steaming coffee, just an anxious expression on her face.

There's an overseas call for you sir. They said it was urgent.

Harry folded his newspaper, jumped up, and followed the waitress out of the breakfast room. He had spoken to Emma just before he went to bed ^{she} ~~she~~ was puzzled by what ^{she} could possible ~~be~~ ^{understand} as urgent. Perhaps it wasn't Emma on the other end of the line - could it be his publisher Tom Gunning?

with the latest sales figures. Had Harry made the bestseller list in ~~the~~ ^{his} first week of publication? Harry quirked his pace, almost running towards the reception desk.

Mr Clifton inquired an assistant behind the counter.

Harry nodded, grabbed the phone and said Harry Clifton, here.

He heard ~~his~~ ^{his wife} sobbing on the other end of the line.

~~He~~ ~~said~~ what's the matter my darling he asked.

Sebastian ~~has~~ ~~been~~ ~~killed~~ dead. He's been killed in a car ~~accident~~, crash.

* * *

Emma put the phone down and tried to compose herself. She walked out of Harry's study, to find Benson standing in the hall waiting for her.

Janie has packed an overnight case for you, madam, and of course, I shall drive you to Harlow.

Thank you Benson she managed as he opened the front door. She made her way to the car, climbed into the back and sank into the leather seat.

Benson switched on the ignition, pushed the gear lever into first, and set out on the long journey to Harlow. Emma wondered if she should have called her brother and sister, ~~and~~ ^{for} tell them the terrible news, after all they were Seb's god parents. But she accepted that Giles was probably in the house, and ^{unavailable while} Grace would be teaching. ~~so~~ She would call them both this evening when she knew more detail.

Benson ~~drove~~ ^{stopped at} the local garage ~~at~~ ^{where} he usually filled up every Friday. When the pump attendant saw Mr Clifton seated in the back, he touched the rim of his cap. He first filled the tank with petrol, and then walked to front, lifted the bonnet and checked the oil. ~~the~~ ^{when} the job ~~was~~ ^{done} completed Benson wound down the window and handed the lad a pound note.

Once they were back on the road Emma tried to

recall

Every word the admission tutor had said.

I'm sorry to have to tell you ^{the truth} that your son has been killed in a tragic road accident, but beyond that he seemed to know very little, because he ^{was} ~~pro~~

Why was her son traveling up to Cambridge by car when she supplied him with a train ticket,

or, who was the other person in the car? Was it Bruno? And if ~~it~~ ^{it} had he survived, or had his parents received the same call? So many questions that needed to be answered, but none of them would be answered before she reached the hospital.

As Benson drove through familiar towns, Bath, Oxford, Henley, happy memories flooded her mind, but only for a moment, before she ^{was} ~~returned~~ ^{returned} to the real world.

By the time ~~she~~ they reached Watford, ^{Emma} ~~she~~ was beginning to wonder if Don Pedro ^{somehow} was involved, but that didn't make sense if the other person in the car

was Bruno. Emma's thoughts switched back to her only son as Benson left the Great West road, and turned onto the A1. The road she must have been traveling on, only ^{Emma} ~~she~~ before.

The ^{same} ~~she~~ ^{had} asked if ~~she~~ ^{her husband} would be willing to identify the body, and she explained that ~~she~~ ^{he} was in New York. Perhaps she wouldn't have agreed to take his place, if she'd realized he would be back in England in less than twenty four hours. Thank God he wasn't going to have to spend five days crossing the Atlantic, mourning in solitude.

When Benson reached the outskirts of the town, Emma was pleased to see clear signposts directing them to the Princess Alexandra Hospital. A few minutes later Benson drove through another set of gates, and drew up outside the entrance to the hospital. He jumped out and opened the back door. Emma emerged, for ~~she~~ ^{her} husband.

and walked slowly up to the front door, pushed her way through the swing door, and made her way to the reception desk.

When she gave the receptionist her name, the girl behind the counter said, will you be kind enough to wait for a moment, while I let Mr Walbrook know you're here.

Mr Walbrook said Gnuma,

He's the senior mortician, and he is expecting ^(pro) you. A few minutes later a nurse appeared, dressed in a smart blue uniform, with a starched white collar and wearing dark woolen stockings.

Will you ^{please} come with me the young nurse asked who then turned and led her ^{changed} to a bank of lifts. They both stepped inside, but neither spoke. What was there to say. Gnuma felt for the young girl who looked so embarrassed.

Once the lift had come to a halt on the fourth ^{floor}, the nurse stepped out and led ~~the~~ ^{Gnuma} down another tiny corridor only she came to a halt outside a door no visitor wanted to enter. ~~The~~ ^{nurse} knocked ^{quietly} on the glass pebbled pane, opened the door, and stood aside to allow Gnuma to enter.

A short, man, with a cadaverous face, did the fare go with the job Gnuma wondered, rose from behind his desk, and waited for Gnuma to be seated before he spoke.

I'm sorry to be the bearer of such sad news he began, and Gnuma felt sorry for him, wondering how many times ^{each day} the poor man had to deliver that sentence. ~~each day~~.

I'm afraid there's a lot of forms to be filled in, but first perhaps you'd like to see your son, as the coroner will want a formal identification before he

was willing to carry
~~out~~ out the inquest.

Emma bowed her head, and burst into tears.
Mr Wainhope quickly came from behind his desk,
and knelt down beside her.

* * *

Tom Gumberg couldn't have been more sympathetic
and helpful. He booked Harry onto the first available
flight to London, first class, with a bed, although
he doubted if the poor man would be able to sleep.
He ~~thought~~ decided this was the time to tell him
the good news, and just asked ~~that~~ his condolences
might be passed on to Emma.

When Harry checked out of the Prieve, thirty
minutes later, he found Tom's chauffeur standing by
the curb, ready to drive him to the airport.

Tom sat in the bulk, as he had no desire,
to involve himself in any casual conversation. ~~Instead~~
his thoughts turned to Emma, and what she must be
going through. Would they ask to identify the body,
or would they wait until he returned.

Harry might have been more excited about
being among the first passengers to cross the ~~the~~
~~Atlantic~~ ^{by plane} ~~without~~ stopping, if the circumstances had
been different. But when the stratu ~~crise~~ took off,
he could only think about his son, and how much
he'd been looking forward to going up to Cambridge
to embark on his freshman year. ~~He~~ ^{Harry} began to think
about more happy times. St Bede's, Munchin Abbey,
that scholarship to Cambridge, he even managed a
smile when he thought about Seb being rebuked,
when he was caught with a serving girl in his
~~room~~ ^{shop}, after ~~ward~~ ^{ward} ~~out~~. What was ^{his} name? And then running
away to Argentina, ⁽¹⁹¹⁰⁾ only to return with a priceless
Rodin, which had its own secret.

when the captain turned off the seat belt sign
As the staff nurse climbed, high into the
sky an air hostess handed ~~her~~ a menu, so
that he could have dinner before going to bed,
~~however~~ ~~she~~ he wouldn't tell her why, he wouldn't
be eating or sleeping that night. As a soldier
he been trained to stay awake for thirty-six
hours, with only a flask of water for
sustenance. But he doubted if he would
eat or sleep before he was reunited with
his son for the last time, and perhaps not
for some time after that.

Mr Wainwright * * *
led Emma silently out of his
room, and down another long corridor, until
he reached a door that few people knew about.
He opened the door, and walked along a
path towards an ~~area~~ winderless building,
that was surrounded ^{by} trees. Wainwright
selected a key from his chain, opened the
door, and accompanied Emma inside. The
sudden change of temperature caused her to
shiver. Mr Wainwright walked down another
corridor, until he reached a thick asymmetrical
sealed door, which led into the mortuary.

When they entered Emma could see a
trolley in the centre of the room, and she
shivered a second time, when she ~~felt~~ ^{recognised} the
faint outline of her son under the white
sheet. A ~~robbed~~ assistant stood at the
~~head~~ ^{head} of the trolley but didn't speak.
Are you ready ~~said~~ ~~the~~ Mr Clark asked
the ~~assistant~~ senior mortician almost whispering.
Yes said Emma firmly, the nails of
her fingers cutting into the palms of her hands.

Mr Walbridge nodded to his assistant who lifted the sheet to reveal a scarred and battered face that Emma recognized immediately. She screamed, and then collapsed ~~on the ground~~ ^{in the street} like a puppet that had ~~had~~ ^{had} its string cut.

Mr Walbridge and the young man, didn't appear surprised, and quickly rushed to the mother's side and gently lifted her ~~up~~ ^{back} up, but they were shocked when ~~she~~ ^{she} said "That's ~~my~~ ^{my} son."

* * *

When the taxi drew up outside the hospital, Harry was surprised to find his wife standing ~~on the top step~~ ^{clearly waiting for him}, and although ~~she~~ ^{she} looked exhausted, she was smiling as she ran towards him. ~~Just before~~ ^{Just before} she stumbled before he ~~took~~ ^{took} her in his arms.

How can that be possible he asked, once he'd released her.

The police assumed, that it must be the owner of the car who was driving, and therefore it had to be Sebastian in the passenger seat.

So who was it in the passenger seat ~~asked~~ ^{asked} Harry quietly.

Bravo, Bruno Martinez, said Emma and they still haven't been able to contact his father. Thank God for that said Harry.

What do you mean, asked Emma looking startled.

Think how much worse it would have been if they had told Martinez, that it was his son.

that had survived, only ^{for him} the later discover
that it was Bruno who had died, and not
Sebastian. Emma remained silent. But as
Harry was involved in the same crash,
what state ^{he} in.

Not good said Emma, to quote ^{Mr Cornfeld} the
senior surgeon ~~Mr Cornfeld~~, there weren't
many bones left in his body to break, and
he's already warned me that he will be
in hospital for several weeks, possible
months, before he'll be able to walk again.

And will I be allowed to see him,

Yes but be warned, you may not
recognise him, he's so covered in plaster
and bandages there's not a lot left of
him to see.

Emma took her husband by the hand,
and led him up the stairs to the first
floor where they were greeted by an
older lady who was dressed in an even
smarter uniform.

Miss Puddlecombe she announced thinking
out her hand. as Harry shook her by the arm
Makin to you said Emma with a grin. ~~They~~
They followed ^{Marion} ~~the~~ into the Benji ward, with
it's two empty rows of beds, occupied by
~~patients~~ who'd been involved in motor accidents.

Miss Puddlecombe came to a cull at the
ward bed, and drew a plastic sheet around
the ~~patient~~ occupant.

Harry slumped down at his side, his left leg
was covered in plaster, and held up by a
pulley, while the other ^{leg} ~~leg~~ in plaster, lay
flat on the bed in front of him.

His head was wrapped in thick bandages,
leaving only one eye peeping out, above
~~sealed lips~~. unmoving lips

Harry watched as the eye followed him,
until he reached the side of the bed, and
although Seb managed a weak smile, no
words formed on his lips.

Harry bent down and kissed his son on
the forehead, when a voice whispered ~~that~~
~~Bruno~~. To hear a voice whisper 'Harry Bruno'

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