**Shockwaves**

Lights flashed strobe-like from the pursuing cars as the black Mercedes swerved recklessly.

The leading car sped into a dark tunnel.

Diana glanced behind her as the cars chased them relentlessly, regardless of the speed.

Henry flashed picture after picture of the car ahead, failing to capture the priceless photograph he needed.

Sally hummed to herself as she cut out a photo of the glowing Diana and stuck it in her scrapbook.

Caitlyn’s heart shattered as she received the news. The letter confirmed the worst.

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Henry rolled over, eyes falling on the pricey cameras sitting on his dresser. He couldn’t touch them. How could he, when mere days ago he had been trying to get a photo of she who now lies dead? His eyes wandered around the walls of his room, dwelling particularly on the pictures he’d taken.

Photos of celebrities. Once he was proud of them, now they left him feeling like a killer. A shiver ran down his back and he quickly turned away from the photos. He slowly emerged from his bed and stalked over to the curtains, casting them open and letting beams of light illuminate the musty room he had bunkered down in. He leant against the window frame and focused on the clouds drifting past. A shadow on the street caught his eyes and he looked down to see a young girl, back hunched with the weight of her schoolbag and a bouquet of flowers nearly falling out of her arms.

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Sally shifted her bag, heavy on her back as she arrived at the palace. Her eyes welled up with tears as she let out a wail that joined the cacophony. She was one of many mourning the angel who had been ruthlessly killed by the paparazzi. She buried her head into the bunch of flowers gripped tightly in her hands.

“I know you’re probably sick of getting all these flowers and not being able to do anything. You must’ve found it easier when you were here. When we gave you endless gifts, you would pass them over to a lady-in-waiting and with your kind heart, you would always make sure they were donated to a hospital. To people who *really* needed them.”

She paused as her voice choked up.

“Oh, I hate the thought of all these flowers dying Diana, but you’re gone and there’s nothing we can do but leave stupid flowers!”

Moving forward, she placed her brightly coloured tulips on the pile that stretched as far as the eye could see. Bouquet after bouquet were stacked on top of each other as if all the flowers in London were for Diana; one could hardly distinguish where each bouquet ended, and another began. A gentle breeze caressed the bouquets, and they danced in the wind.

Ambulance sirens wailed past the palace, and Sally’s thoughts drifted to the hospital Diana had died in.

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Nervous energy raced through Caitlyn as she was greeted with warm smiles. Sinking into the hospital’s waiting room seat, she tried to focus on her breathing.

“Tragedy that struck the nation’s heart. The Prince of Wales flew back to Britain last night with the body of his former wife, Diana, Princess of Wales, who was killed with her lover, Dodi Fayed, in a car crash in Paris yesterday.”

Caitlyn tried to block out the headline as the reporter’s voice was replaced with a video of mourners crowding Kensington Palace. The camera panned, revealing hundreds of people clutching bouquets, looking like ants returning to the nest with food.

Caitlyn took her thoughts back to her breathing.

But despite her intention to block the news out, her ears picked up a young woman’s angry voice. Even though her eyes weren’t glued to the telly like the nurses, she realised that the young woman’s voice belonged to Sally Merther, her next-door neighbour.

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With a start, she leant forward beyond the sea of flowers. The guilty party showed no sign of remorse as she yelled at him.

“You killed her! And now you have the nerve, the audacity to come back here and use our pain! Get lost! You heard me!”

The photographer pointed to a tag hanging from his jacket.

“Official photographer Miss. I am *not*one of those ‘killers’ as you call them.”

“Oh. Sorry. It’s just, photographers make me think of the flashes that filled the air when Diana died. It was so inhumane how she was hunted and preyed upon by humans that have no soul. They probably would have eaten her alive if they’d gotten close enough.” She scoffed. “Soulless killers. My neighbour is one of them. The pathetic beast hasn’t even dared show his face. He’s just cowering away in his apartment.”

She pulled out a magazine from her backpack.

“Look at this. They’ve moved on already, like Diana didn’t even exist.” She read the headline out. “Madonna coming to England, exclusive pictures! Absolutely disgusting.”

The photographer grimaced and nodded, unsure of what to say. He turned back to his original goal and pushed to another part of the crowd, snapping more photos of the overflowing love and dedication shown through the basic bouquet. Sally followed suit and pushed through the sea of people until she got back to the road.

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Henry felt a wave of nausea wash over him.

*A woman is dead because of you. Because of your job. And yet, there’s still a part of you telling you to go back to it? How can you even consider it? Who’s going to be next? Posh Spice, Madonna, that new chap Leonardo DiCaprio?*

He thought of what his sister had said. Him being part of the chase doesn’t mean that he killed her. It was the driver. Way over the legal drinking limit. He wasn’t even that close really. If he was, the police would have taken him into custody.

Seeing the bills scattered on the floor, he sighed. He knew he had to pay off the mortgage on his beautiful top floor apartment in a grand Victorian home. The pounds he received for each photo would do that in no time at all.

He rested his head against the window and sighed. Regret clouded his brain as he thought of his parents. *You could be a doctor Henry! This photography business is just a dream of yours.* He scoffed. Maybe he should’ve listened to his parents and followed the medical path of a doctor. That would’ve paid the bills.

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“Doctor, is there really nothing you can do?” She looked down at the tubes that were pumping liquid into her arms. “Aren’t the treatments good enough?”

“We found the cancer too late. These treatments are delaying the effects, but the end is inevitable. I’m sorry Caitlyn. I’ll give you some space.”

Caitlyn had never felt more alone. She had always been the one with the connections, the one who would always have something to do and people to see. And now, here she was. Sitting alone in a hospital bed, hooked up to machines that beeped as if mocking her ticking life clock.

She reached for the telly remote, hoping to block out her thoughts with a cheesy comedy. Instead, a familiar face flashed on the screen.

“Princess Diana, dead. The nation? Never been more alive. People are flocking to the palaces to lay their respects to the former Princess of Wales.”

Caitlyn let out a scream of frustration.

“God, I know she’s dead. But I’m *dying.* My whole life is going to end because of a sickness out of my control. I know what she did, and I know that everyone loves her, but *I’m* dying.”

Her eyes became blue pools, and she bit her lip. As the first tear ran down her cheek, Caitlyn muttered to herself.

“There’s more to life than those who are dead.”