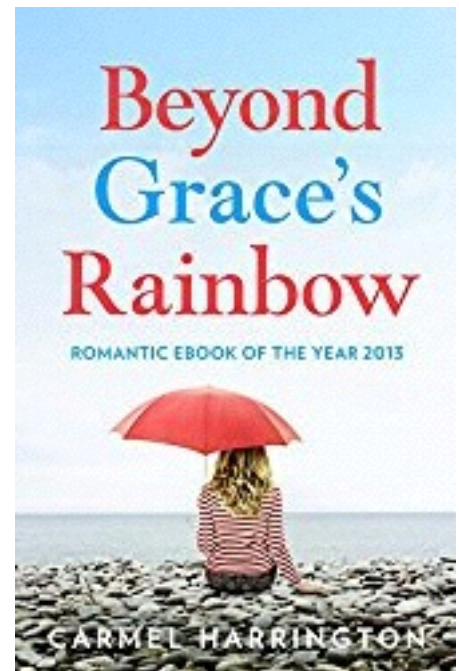


Irish Times Bestseller
Romantic eBook of the Year 2013
Kindle Book of the Year 2013

*Heartbreaking and funny, a story of love,
family and friendships, that will stay with you,
long after you close the final page*



Prologue

Friday 13th February 2012

Grace felt like she was floating up on the ceiling. Down below on the ground, she could see Dr Kennedy sitting in a battered old brown leather chair. He was leaning forward, earnestly, looking at somebody who looked very much like herself.

‘That reminds me, I must get my roots done,’ Grace thought as she looked down critically at herself. Sitting beside Grace was Sean, her friend. She knew that it was not possible to be in two places at once - she hadn’t lost her marbles - yet. But at this very moment here she was up on the ceiling, watching the scene below. Grace knew it had to be her sitting below because she could actually feel Sean’s hand gripping hers tightly. So the only logical explanation she could come up with was that she was having one of those ‘out of body’ experiences. The other possibility was that the shock of the news that had just been delivered stopped her heart and she had actually died.

Oh feck, that couldn’t be true. Surely you wouldn’t think about the state of your roots just after dying?

‘Do you understand what I’ve just told you Grace?’ Dr Kennedy’s voice jolted Grace back to reality with a bump and a crash. She felt like she’d fallen from the ceiling and landed unceremoniously into the uncomfortable chair. So she was not dead then, Grace thought wryly. For a second she felt like complaining about the terrible chairs the patients had to sit on,

while doctors had lovely comfortable leather ones. The injustice of it seemed unbearable. But maybe this wasn't the time.

'I want to go back up there.' Grace said instead, pointing to the ceiling.

'Grace, honey, you're not making any sense.' Sean said to her, he looked really worried. She knew he was probably thinking she'd gone mad. Maybe she had.

'Grace?' Dr Kennedy said gently. 'Do you understand what I've just told you?'

No more floating on the ceiling. No more analysis on the state of the chairs. She knew she had to answer him. She decided she'd have one more stab at dodging the truth.

'No I don't understand, Dr Kennedy. There's been some kind of stupid mistake and I'll be honest with you, it's not on. I'll be writing a strong letter to complain. I have a cold or maybe even proper flu. That's why I've had this bad pain in my back. You always get aches and pains when you have proper flu.' She turned triumphantly to Sean. As a GP himself he was always complaining about his patients coming in with the common cold saying they were in bits with the flu. As he often said, when you have the flu, you know it, you can't move, your body is aching so much. Unfortunately Sean just looked away from her. He couldn't look her in the eye. That wasn't good.

Grace looked at both of them with growing desperation. She knew that at this stage she was clutching at straws.

Dr Kennedy tried again, this time his tone sharper. 'Grace, you have a form of leukaemia, commonly known as AML - Acute Myelogenous Leukaemia. I know that it's a lot to take in and you must have many questions for me. I'll do my best to answer them as honestly as I can. But there's no doubt I'm afraid.'

Grace felt a tear run down her cheek. She felt like a truck had literally smashed into her body and she could hardly breathe. Her son's beautiful face popped into her head. His little voice was saying in his beautiful sing-song voice, 'Mommy, I love you!'

And with that she knew she had to pull herself together. She knew she had to fight this with every core of her being, for Jack's sake. So yes Dr Kennedy, she sure did have questions to ask. Thousands of questions started jumping into her head, so much so she thought it was going to explode.

But the only question she wasn't aware she was even thinking was the one that she whispered to them.

'Dr Kennedy, am I going to die?'