





Tony Indigo

or

RIGHT  
AROUND  
THE RAINBOW



Dedicated to Tony Indigo,  
who went around the rainbow and brought us back this story,  
and with it the keys to the world, on many levels;  
and to all his mothers, sisters and brothers  
and others. . .



PLEASE, DEAREST READER,

do not worry about the undecided nature of the tense  
throughout this story; is it in the past; is it in the future;  
is it in the present – or what?

If, for the duration of the story, you can suspend your belief in  
the linear nature of 'time', you will be doing me a great favour.

If you can keep it up afterwards, you will be doing yourself an  
even greater one.



LAMBTON'S LAMENT

O my bairn has lost her lover  
Now she cries when once she smiled,  
She must live her life without him  
And she'll never have his child.

When they should be picking flowers  
In this season of rebirth  
In the morning she must scatter  
His ashes on the earth.

Though his spirit walks beside her  
and he watches from above  
Must she live her life without him  
Her first and only love?

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## ONE

### SUNDAY EVENING

What's going on? Is something wrong with Diana? I'm holding her, asleep at last - Stella is already tucked up - and I feel a dreading, fearing, gut-wrenching agony in my belly. It is so sad, so fearful and I don't know why.

*'I tell you, I think you're heading for a crash,' says someone on my radio as I write. What IS this - 'Dangerous Corner ', or 'I Have Been Here Before'?*

My baby - something's going to happen to my baby!

*Yesterday morning: Going out of the front door with Phil and the twins. There's beautiful golden sunlight, like it's glinting through beech leaves in a perfect garden on a warm September evening. But it's January in our street in Benham; freezing cold and smelling of cats and curry.*

*Two people walk down the road, hand in hand, with a twin*

*halo made all of gold. It's Faith and Tony, on their way back from the pizza shop. They are so lovely, the two of them - Indigos? Crystals? Starseeds?*

*Mind you, if anyone had said that kind of stuff to me then, I'd have - erm - sneered, like when Heidi, Phil's crazy old hippie friend, described telling a bedtime story to her little boy as 'weaving a blanket out of mungbeans' - sorry - 'moonbeams. . .'*

*Even though my dad, at least, had been essaying communication from some more elevated plane for some considerable time now, he got little response from me, I have to admit. . . like that summer when I was on my own with the kids after the departure of husband number three, when I lived my life to the cheery accompaniment of Nick Drake; when I wished for Phil, and got him. The huge house we were renting was full of people unseen.*

## MONDAY LUNCHTIME

*Get home from shopping to an empty house ( 'How is Isaac today? ', I ask my daughter, on the phone, and she replies, ' His eyes are still weeping and he still catches his breath. . . ' ).*

Faith is not back from Rosie's where they all stayed over last night. Two missed calls - no number. Probably someone after money. It rings again as I am checking; should I answer? I don't, and then feel bad about it. Hiding from stuff is no way to fix it. But, hey - they'll call again if they *really* want to talk to me. It niggles, though. Starting to worry about Faith now, too,

but she walks through the door just as the phone rings again.  
She shames me into answering it, 'Go on Mum – you can't just  
not answer - it might be important!'  
She picks it up and hands it to me.

All the blood drains from my body.

No. No, please, God, let this not be real.

I cry out, 'NO!'

'Mum, what? What! Something's happened! It's Tony, isn't  
it . . . I knew something would happen if he went with Joe!'

\* \* \*

Where the HELL is the taxi?!

We are outside the house, looking desperately up and down the  
street. A car slows down - I guess it's a taxi, and get in with  
Faith.

An ancient Asian man is driving - says he is not answering our  
call but will take us to the hospital.

'It's OK, love, it'll be OK. It's got to be OK. He can't die - he  
CAN'T!' and I really believe this as I am telling her.

We're there. The man won't take the ten pounds offered. I

have no bag, no pocket. I just keep the note folded in my hand; a tiny little damp rectangle.

Annie and Greg in a tiny room. She talks; he just sits, looking like a dead man.

'One per cent brain function. No hope. Life support. A matter of time. . .'

We were allowed to see Tony - hard to avoid him, really, since he was still in A&E, right beside the main entrance, waiting for a bed in Intensive Care.

As we went through, two plain-clothes doctors were coming out; one shaking his head, the other making a French '*bouf*' gesture with his shoulders and hands.

Tony lay motionless on a trolley, giving not the slightest indication that his brain was so swollen it was trying to get out through his ears.

A nurse explained later that, had he not been so heavily sedated, he would have been writhing in agony, and screaming.

As it was, he looked like an angel, whitely blanketed, palely pink. He seemed to sleep, except that his beautiful blue, long-lashed eyes were taped shut. He felt soft and cool. It was unbearable.

Outside in the corridor, I found Adam and Sam.

'What's going on, Mum?'

What indeed, all my sons . . .

*'Brother, brother. . .There's far too many of you dying.  
Mother, mother. . .There's far too many of you crying.'  
'Talk to me, so you can see what's going on.'*



## TWO

It was black ice on a sharp bend. Joe's new sports car skidded right across the road and up the embankment, clipping the bridge and overturning before bouncing back onto the road upside down.

Jesus.

Joe had internal injuries; the bloke in the back that we didn't know got his pelvis fractured, and sweet little Tony -

*' . . . where'd it all go wrong? He hit the wall, singing his favourite song. And it all comes crashing down. . . '*

*Bitter-sweet symphony indeed, Richard.*

My baby - I can't let this happen to my baby!

*'Running down corridors, through automatic doors - got to get to you, got to see this through . . . '*

Er - whose baby, exactly?

Faith - I mean Faith!

She's had so much pain in her life already - me and Rich breaking up 'cos of his drinking; her poorly eye; her heart murmur; the bullying at school; her first boyfriend, the very cute Si, who just vanished, later to be discovered in Leeds, hiding from drug dealers he had crossed. . . I don't WANT this to be happening! I want to save her from it. I want to hurt FOR her, like when Adam had his tonsils out -

*'Mummy, please stop the hurt - please . . . '*

I see her in her Moses basket; seven days old but with the air of an ancient one, looking like she is bearing all the sorrows of all the universes.

HELP US ALL, SOMEONE!

At some point I decide I have to go home to Phil and the twins - without Faith. She won't leave. Won't eat either.

It's dark and spooky but I walk, because home is just around the corner from the hospital where he ended up.

They lay in the road for half an hour before anyone saw. After they were cut out of the wreckage - he was stuck fast, and didn't come easily - they were taken to hospital in nearby Hexfield, then transferred to Newborough because of the extent of the injuries - especially Tony's. His are invisible, 'cos they are inside his head.

He hadn't a single bruise until the bastards did the autopsy and

pulled his brain out through his nose. His mother wouldn't let anyone see him in his coffin because of his bent nose.

Except Faith, of course.

*Isaac was so cute, and we were so relieved to see him at last, after she'd been pushing for eight hours. His shoulder had wedged behind her pelvis - sometimes they break the baby's collar-bone to get it out when that happens - and his nose had got a bit bent.*

Walking home, I do not understand. I do not even believe it.

I kept saying to myself, and to Faith, at the hospital, that it could still be all right.

He may pull round.

They may have got it wrong - underestimated him. Why else keep him on life-support through the night? They were going to assess him in the morning. Why would they bother if there was no chance?

I wasn't just trying to make her feel better - I really believed it.

I'm walking with my eyes shut. I don't want to see. It's all still there, taking no notice.

I scream 'WHY?!' at the sky, but I get no answer. I open my eyes to cross the road - roads are dangerous - then shut them again to keep out the life. She might die too.

We might all die.

Then it would be all right.

We'd all be together again, somewhere.  
Over the bloody rainbow.  
At home, I put the folded tenner under the big vase on the hall table.

Phil has slept, he says, and dreamed of a burning bush. He has cooked fish and chips - and peas. Diana hadn't yet learned to put them up her nose for a laugh. I eat every scrap, though I feel no hunger.

Seven years later, I can still taste it.

I get the girls off to sleep but I can't settle at all. I am retracted - re-attracted - magnetically to the hospital. I walk, 'cos the ten pound note is not where I left it.

They have finally managed to find him a bed in Intensive Care. There's a waiting room full of aunts and uncles. They are all very funny and there's an in-joke about the egg and salami sandwiches Auntie Cath has made specially in his honour. It's around two in the morning and they are all awake, having a wake. . . .

We all sleep fitfully in various odd corners of the hospital, where we are allowed to wander.

Not until the proper morning do I go in and see him.

*Later, from another place, he reminded me of this - showed a picture of what it was like for him then. While his body lay still, brain-bloated and ( 'you stop the blood and make my head soft ' sings a band on the radio as I write. The next song is*

*dedicated to Tony. . . ) sedated, he sort of swooped out through the top of his head and sat up, his spirit bottom resting where his visible head lay.*

There is a funny smell.

TUESDAY

Waiting for Shaun, his best friend, to get down from Scotland, where he's working.

He's not going to make it by one o'clock. . .

We queued up to say goodbye.

Kissed his cheek.

His eyelids are now fastened down with special shield things; see-through, but they mess up his lovely lashes.

He looks like he is fast asleep.

He shines, radiant like a golden rose.

He smells of rotting meat.

Half an hour later, it's over. Annie and Greg and Faith went in and switched him off. She goes 'click' ( in that tiny little walnut place in her brain - click that amygdala, girl! ) 'I'm fine. No, not coming home. Will go with Rosie. Do some shopping. Have a drink. I'm fine.'

Shaun turns up, and is wretched.

It always matters, doesn't it? It always seems really important

to get there in time to say goodbye and tell them how much you love them, and apologize if you think you have hurt them, and make up quarrels you think they might still be having with you.

You do not realize that they are already loving you with shiny eternal love that is beyond all notion of tiny self and slow-vibrating conditionality.

They have already forgiven you for everything, even stuff you haven't got round to doing yet, and they are busily preparing to forgive and love entire galaxies.

Later - very late - she comes home. Sleeps in his clothes - his jacket that she bought him for Christmas.

She took a photo of him wearing it in our front room on Boxing Day.

All the kids had been round for tea. He was most impressed with the turkey and ham pie – complimentary too about the veggie version I'd made for Faith.

She loved to cook for him. She made bacon sandwiches and offered them to him as if they were the very *mfkzt*.

Once, he'd stayed over and I secretly made up a packed lunch on Sunday night for him to take in the morning, with ham sandwiches, cheese sandwiches and a huge slice of the chocolate cake I'd just made.

It was too late to ice it if I wanted to get to bed before the

twins woke up, so I just drizzled it with Dairy Milk.

It was hard to pack - cling-film no good, 'cos of the warm chocolate, and I never was one for Tupperware.

Found, at the back of the pantry, a tall stack of plastic trays my mum had given me for the twins to mix paint in, or whatever. They were new, she assured me. Came from the fish-packing place opposite her house, on the quayside - somebody or other's daughter worked there and had a collection of them. The trays were (*are* - I still have some) rectangular, about six inches by four, by two deep, made of thin white plastic, with fluted edges and a sort of concentric circle design on the base.

I guess the fish goes in with one of those little nappies in the bottom to soak up the blood and fish juice, and it's covered in cling-film - or maybe it's hermetically sealed. Two of them together held a large slice of damp chocolate cake most comfortably, thank you, fixed together with cling-film.

Great stuff, cling-film.

Pity it doesn't work on heads.



### THREE

We - me and Rich - walk back to the house, where twins are playing and Phil makes tea.

My head hurts , ( *'No more hurting'*, says a song that is *'Golden Brown' mashed*) as if somebody is sawing the top off like a boiled egg.

I also need a pee.

I take out two aspirin and hurry upstairs, leaving the tablets towards the back of the kitchen bench out of the reach of twinny fingers, even though I know I can trust them not to be so silly as to eat bitter-tasting willow-bark powder.

Am impressed by tidiness of house, upstairs as well as down; shame it takes a dead man to get me out of the house long enough for this to happen without me, I think, unworthily.

A nice cup of tea - refreshing despite pulsating cranium. Ah yes - my pain-killing drugs, on the bench.

Er - hello!

Oh God - where are the babas?

'You haven't let them near the aspirin, have you?!' , I rant, all headachey and minging.

'What? Where did you leave them? The babas are playing with their Lego under the table. They haven't been in here, it's OK.'

Hunt high and low and everywhere in between, but there is no trace of the aspirin. I check the pack to make sure I did take them out, 'cos my head really isn't working very well, and, yes, I did take them out.

They are nowhere at all.

Like Tony.

*( 'Never Enough' plays now - my radio is playing excerpts from our CD of ambient funeral music )*

What the hell are we going to do? Now. Ever? *( now the radio's playing 'September' , from Earth, Wind and Fire )*

There will be some of you reading who know what it felt like. It was just the end of everything.

There was no point in living on.

I still wanted us all to be dead, but I knew that wouldn't happen, so there was going to be endless torture.

It was all dead and empty and wretched, so that it felt like

someone had disembowelled you and cut your heart out, but you could still feel sick in your belly and your heart could still break.

And that was just me, for God's sake - what about my baby?

What about his mother?

I didn't want anything.

I didn't want to do anything.

I didn't want to BE.

At the back of my head, there was a frenzied buzzing, like I'd eaten a whole tub of Q10 and they'd been diverted to my reptile brain, whizzing it along God knows where, leaving my higher brain parts to get on with their determined descent into the phantom matrix, where all is forever grey and cold and misery.

I go to sit by myself in the front room, and my eyes cry but the rest of me can't be bothered.

In the middle of the floor lies a ten pound note, face up. Her Majesty smiles at me. Hey - who let Patrick Swayze in here?

'Money and drugs - that'll be Tony!', quips Rosie when I tell her about it later.

I never got the aspirin back; I guess his headache was worse than mine.



## FOUR

THURSDAY

Do you know what I'm thinking of doing?

Do you?

I'm remembering the article I read in the Journal about an old woman called Irene proudly showing off the new altar (*'altar - St Petroch' - radio ghost story says*) at the Newborough Spiritual Investigation Society and I want to go and see her.

I want to, but I'm scared witless!

No-one offers to accompany me - they just look at me funny.

It won't go away, though; it's like I've got to do it. It's way past wanting now - I've got no choice.

Find the Yellow Pages, ring 'em up, leave a message.

Half an hour later, they ring me back.

The woman - Verna - sounds a bit surprised at my incoherent wittering. But surely they must have people in that state calling them all the time? She says I can go round at six and two people will talk to me before the Open Circle Meeting.

Rosie came with me in the end.

We sat in a little room with faded chintz chairs and had a cup of tea. It's the mediums' room - where visiting mediums are entertained and rehydrated after a demonstration, because the spirits have a tendency to take the water - literally.

Irene and Jean were great - they were mildly amused at my earnestness, being themselves so matter-of-fact about ongoing communication following disconnection from the life-support machine. They told us to look out for the shivers - like someone's walking over your grave, and for seeing things out of the corner of your eye - a shadow disappearing through a doorway. I was a bit disappointed in that, I must admit; all that stuff had been going on for days. . . full-on manifestation was what I needed!

Didn't feel up to staying to the Open Circle. Irene was disappointed, but we promised we'd come back again. She told us we ought to start a journal, listing odd happenings and relating them to other events as we lived on.

FRIDAY

Faith not home again.

Was feeling achingly numb.

It's that feeling you get when the really great bloke your daughter was so in love with has had his head stove in and his neck snapped by bouncing across the bypass upside-down in his friend's new sports car on his way to work on a frosty January morning.

I don't think you get it any other time.

It might be a bit like the feeling that makes you scream, 'They're taking my baby away!', so they bruise the backs of your hands putting in more lines of anaesthetic while they scrape out your insides after your second miscarriage - I don't know; I was unconscious then.

Phil had gone on ahead into town and I was going to follow in a bit, because Stella and Diana were once more asleep at an inappropriate time. Or something.

I sat at the desk with my head in my hands.

And someone spoke to me. . . . .

'I can't make her hear. I try to tell her but she can't hear me. You tell her for me. I'm really scared for her. . . . you've got to tell her for me!'

Whoa.

Now I'm really scared.

I am in the house alone with a Dead, and he is shouting at me.

What's that smell? Oh, for God's sake - there's an ozone smell like with a plug that's blowing up, only it's like all the plugs are doing it.

I quit the communications port and go to check every socket and switch in the house.

The smell gets stronger upstairs.

It leads me to Faith's room.

Oh.

The door's open.

Er - hi, folks. I know it was shut; she hides in there with it shut, and she shuts it up whenever she goes out.

I go in, and all the hairs all over my body go 'ping!' and stick up in a comedy way.

The air is sticky with electricity.  
Or something.

It buzzes.

*I* buzz – at the back of my head,  
behind my right ear.

Oh, shit.

'If you're really here, love, please give me something for her – she's the one who needs to know.'

( *'They really need to know. . . .'* some fishermen on the radio.)

'Give me something I can show her - and tell me WHY?  
Why did you have to go?

'WHY?!', I cried, and the buzzing stopped, with a crack like lightning - like the sound my leg made when it snapped in the bus station as I twisted round to avoid falling in front of the bus I had just missed; I was on my way home to the children after handing in an essay.

How did I twist round like that, so it was just my leg that got broken?

How, when Faith and I were hit by an eighty-five year old speed king going the wrong way up the one-way street with the Women's Centre in it where Chris's mum used to work until she left to be Isaac's full-time nana, did we merely fly gracefully through the air in a sitting position as if we had ejector seats, enjoying the sensation of flying we got as we sailed past the upper windows of the aforementioned Centre?

Why did we land on our bottoms rather than our heads?

So we could be here now, doing our parts in this; that's why.

Now it makes sense.

It didn't then, in Faith's room.

After the crack, I thanked him, and went downstairs to the twins, who slept on, unfazed. I rang Phil, and gabbled incoherently, but he got the message anyway and hurried back. As soon as he came through the door, he could smell the ozone. He too checked all the plugs; but quickly, as I wanted him upstairs to feel the atmosphere in Faith's room.

He felt it.

All the little hairs on his body stood up.

The hair on his head is a bit long and thick for such antics, but mine did a good impression of the hair of somebody who has just seen - or at least spoken to - a ghost.

We decided to give up on the shopping and make do with the nappies and cereal we had, and stayed where we were, marvelling in a shaky way, all day.

Faith generally came home at mealtimes, but would not eat. Indeed could not.

As it is when you are giving birth or being bereaved. Your energy comes from elsewhere. From the place you are in direct contact with then. You breathe in the prahna and transmute it. Dinner is superfluous. Not so, stylish trousers. . .

She was off out again directly, as soon as she could get changed

into her new pinstripe flares. . . .

'MUM!!'

'What, love?'

'Who's done this to my new trousers?'

'Done what, love?', I ask with some trepidation, wondering. . . .

I go up and see.

The left leg is rolled up to the knee! Faith is visibly shaken. I assure her that it was not me, wondering at the odd choice of sign.

At the time the Masonic connection was distant, and I did not see how that could be the message he was trying to give us - her.

I explained what had happened while she was out as best I could.

She looked at once sceptical and completely trusting; disbelieving and entirely convinced; as ancient and helpless as she had looked in her Moses basket all those years - yet it seemed like seconds - ago.

'But I don't want him to be a ghost!' she cried out to me, as I had cried out to the sky.



## FIVE

I have some washing to do.

For Tony.

He is going smart casual - white t-shirt and jeans, and his new jacket in case it's winter in the Summerlands.

Most of his clothes are still at our house, including the flannel trousers in the freezer. . . Faith had boasted of my talent for removing chewing-gum by means of extreme cold, and the pants had taken up long-term residence in the freezer, waiting for the gum to give up the ghost.

They make it out of plastic now, so it gives up before the ghost arrives.

The jeans were fairly easy, and when they were shiny blue, I pressed them more carefully than if they had been a wedding dress.

The t-shirt was more of a task - he had been wearing it to work

at the garage, and it was covered in motor oil. Washed it over and over to no avail, and eventually resorted to bleach, having decided that it did not matter too much if the bleach weakened the fabric - it didn't need to last.

I ironed and folded it and loved it and wondered just what was going on here.

I wasn't just doing this for Faith - or Annie, though God knows *she* wouldn't be feeling like doing it. No - it was more intimate than it had a right to be.

Where was all this love coming from?

*I bring in the tray with tea and cake, and find Eva peering closely at the photo on the wall. She has come from the Torch Group for Developing Mediumship that I have started going to on Thursdays.*

*We have moved house again, and I feel I am stuck in my development and can't move forward, but I am not sure why.*

*I have some ideas which seem outrageous even to me, and I cannot share them even with Phil; so I have phoned Eva and she has come round to the house to have a chat about it.*

*She is great, even more down-to-earth than Irene. (I have since been told that Spirit are pleased with my down-to-earthness too - apparently some mediums go about with their heads in the clouds and start thinking outlandish thoughts - ahem! I have been thanked for bringing the gift back into the family, which is nice) It is Diana and Stella's trampoline afternoon. Phil has*

*taken them to the Leisure Centre on his own so I can talk to Eva.*

*'Is this the young man?' asks Eva, 'He's lovely, isn't he? I hope you don't mind me asking you this, and please don't be offended, but have you ever had a miscarriage?'*

*A big, invisible punchbag hits me full-on in the face and chest. It bursts like a neutron bomb, and I am drenched in a warm, apricot-coloured, energy of such love as I didn't know existed. I am left standing, but all the old life is vapourized out of me.*

*'Yes ', I whisper weakly, 'I've had two. I know one was a girl - I still speak to her, but - I - I had a feeling . . . . .'*

*'Well, you were right - you knew!'*

*It seemed so weird, though - sort of not proper - he was Faith's boyfriend. I feel a bit embarrassed.*

*We talked some more, about some of the things I had experienced, and she said I had been very privileged - like Jean said when I told her about Sue, Sarah's mum ( 'Mum!' calls out someone on the radio), allowing me to travel part of the way with her, when she passed over.*

Faith is pleased enough with the clothes, and takes them over to Annie's.

Greg picks her up in the car, and I give her the cards, one for Annie and Greg, and one, with a Peter Pan message in it, saying the window will always be open, to go in the coffin

with Tony.

Jesus - to go in the COFFIN with Tony? I can't handle this.

My baby is putting presents in a coffin for her lover.

She's seventeen, for Christ's sake! How can this be happening?  
Why is it happening?

What have we done to deserve it?

What had he done to deserve it?

Look for the good in things? Learn from situations?

What the hell good can there be in this?

What can anybody be learning?

*On way to Jean's Spiritual Awareness class at the church in Jesmont. My legs stop and will not walk as I am coming out of the Metro station. Que? I'm late already - what's this about? I have to write, and - yes - I've even got a bit of paper. No pen, though; only a blunt brown kohl pencil.*

*'If things are not making sense, it is because we are looking in the wrong place for the plan,' I scrawl, and then my legs work again.*

*I arrive to find that it did not matter too much my being late, as Jean can't make it tonight. She has asked that we write a philosophy and leave it there for her to collect and look at.*

*There's a pile of paper and some pens, but I just give my Metro message to Verna and go home to put the twins to bed.*

*There is, after all, no reason why a plan cosmic in nature should make sense on every level of existence. It's like trying to teach the Special Theory of Relativity to your pet ant.*

*Very big things are as hard to see as very small things. We are only comfy in our tiny little range of wavelengths. Like only being able to exist within the tiny layer of atmosphere surrounding the planet. Like only being able to survive within a very limited range of temperatures.*

*Like only seeing seven colours - three on either side of the green we need so badly.*

*Like, in fact, having to vibrate in harmony with our surroundings.*

Faith is deciding what to put in with him for going-away presents and is looking for the little bear - the one they found when they went to that beach way up the coast. It was just like the beach in the children's book about going on a bear hunt, and they FOUND A BEAR!

*( I have bought a pop-up 'Going on a Bear Hunt' for Isaac. I hope it will be a while before he is allowed it, though. Now, he would bash it to bits on the loudest surface he could find, having first given it a thorough chewing with his fierce hard gums! )*

She is going to the Chapel of Rest with his mum and dad, to dress him for his journey. No-one else is allowed, though. Annie

is too upset about his appearance. His nose had moved, she said; all bent, it was, and he was bruised where his head had been hit in the crash - or somehow.

*Me and Rosie at Sunday service in Jesmont. Billy is doing the demonstration and links with a young man who feels empty - often the case when organs have been removed . . .*

Funeral day.

We are going *en famille* in a minibus, minus Rosie who has gone in the car with Faith. Rich is here too. Jonny has come up from York without Sarah, who is too pregnant.

It's too much like when we went down to Harrogate for their wedding. Tony came with us in the taxi and ate flapjacks on the way. He was wearing Sam's suit and a shirt the colour of his eyes. Sue's dress was the same shade of sky, with a matching pashmeena, tied gypsy-stylee around her head to cover her baldness from the chemo. She danced smoochily with Trevor, who has devil's eyebrows.

*'I'm seeing a three-tier wedding cake; full of rum, not brandy like you'd expect,' says Billy, who is doing the Sunday demonstration of mediumship at Jesmont.*

*I do not own up to having baked the very cake that he describes, 'cos he warned 'someone' in the hall in a message from Spirit ( I am hearing a band called Duality on the radio. Their van flipped over on ice and one of them died . . . ) not to 'assume' too much.*

*I then assumed that NONE of the messages could be for me, rather than assuming one of them WOULD be.*

*Anyway - cake was delicious, if a trifle unstable on the table at the reception.*

*Now I remember talking to Sue at Jonny and Sarah's graduation, too.*

*I had been having dreams about her condition - feeling it; the pain in the same places, the wooziness and weakness in the stomach.*

*I tell her about it while we try to calm Susan, who, at three months, is not impressed by the Prince of Jordan who has come all that way to give the address, and wants her mum to give her a feed.*

*Susan who wouldn't join in with the cosy home birth plans favoured by Jonny and Sarah, and made us - Sue and me - spend many hours going to and from the Maternity Hospital. Sue asked me about dying that day, and wanted to know all about Tony and how much he was still with us.*

*Was I sure, she asked.*

*I told her I was absolutely certain.*

*She told me about a friend of her healer, who had promised to come back after she died, and did, to prove she was still there.*

*We ate organic pizza, and Jamaica ginger cake - with butter on it - in her kitchen during the quiet times, while Susan remained undecided as to her exact birthday.*

*I remember talking to Sue for the last time - took her a sunflower. It was so lovely in her room - she managed to leave from home.*

*It was like visiting a new mother and baby, with that same clean peaceful love all through it. Light blue and yellow. Like sky with a sun.*

*( ' . . . Just another ordinary miracle today ' , sings the radio).*

*We talked like our true soul selves. I told her I loved her, and she said she loved me too, and that it was like we had always known each other.*

*We have. I wrote her a long letter on the way home.*

*Two days later, being unable to go back down as we'd intended 'cos the twins were unwell and anyway we hadn't the money for bus or train and couldn't get a lift, I was at home having a cup of tea and was taken into a meditative state where I could see to the sky where the dining-room wall ought to be - duh?*

*I was looking down on family and thinking I didn't really mind that much. I was sad that I was leaving them, but it was a kind of sadness I didn't know, where it seemed silly to mind, because I had no choice in the matter - or rather the lack of matter - and I was so free and content, there was no way I was going to fight against it. I was out of there, thank you, on my*

*way home.  
Moving on up.*

*There was an archway in a shining yellow wall, through which  
I could see pink roses climbing.  
I was heading for the roses.*

*The phone rang and brought me back. It was Heather, Sarah's  
sister. Sue had just gone, peacefully. They read my letter to her  
and did tai chi, and she passed away beautifully. ( 'Infinity on  
high ', sings someone on my radio)*

She came back see-through, to the end of Trevor's bed, to say  
goodbye, three days on . . .



## SIX

Hambleton was beautiful - bright and sunny and just a bit chilly - but it *was* January, after all, on the earth where we all still were.

Stella and Diana had come too, wearing their new grey fleece dresses and navy coats and boots, and needing to wee as soon as we arrived - not before, which was very impressive! The house opposite the church belongs to a kind and hospitable lady who does not mind at all the growing queue of ladies needing to visit her lovely cosy bathroom.

There were over seven hundred people - attending the funeral, not all in the queue for the lavvy.

Stella and Diana impressed by hearse, and how very long it was. Explained that Tony's magic box was inside it - the box he was going away in - to The Nice Place. This is still our shorthand for the other, rarely-glimpsed dimensions.

*He says, 'Thank you for the flowers - it was a lovely day - and I'm getting the name 'Wendy'. Do you recognize that name?'* ,

*asks Irene as Faith and I are leaving after a healing session at Irene's house, shortly after the funeral.*

*Peter Pan...*

Faith and Belle had compiled a tape of his VERY high quality favourite music.

It was amazing - soul, funk, U2 and Bitter-sweet Symphony. Stevie Wonder. Top music for a wedding reception.

Faith did not speak, of course, though Rosie did her bit beautifully. She wrote it and spoke it and it said so well how they all were together. She was brilliant.

Belle read '*Another Room*', which was just exactly right, and how it felt.

His uncle told in a eulogy - ahem - the story of the trainer in the taxi, where Tony and friend had taken a taxi back to Hexfield and beyond, and then found that they had no money. They made a dash for it; the driver gave chase, and caught Tony Achilles-like, by the heel. He, of course, ever resourceful, kept on running, after the shoe was caught. They weren't cheap, either . . .

He shared that trait with Faith, the shoe thing. I helped her pack when she and Chris moved from Newborough to Leeds, and there were two egg boxes entirely filled with her shoes.

There was another one full of Tony things; photos, letters, scraps of stuff. I looked through them when I was alone in the flat after Faith and Chris had gone off in the van, and I time-

travelled back there.

*'Let's all meet up in the year 2000;  
Won't it be great when we're all fully-grown . . . . .'*

Outside the church, in the sunshine, we were thanked by Greg, all smart and ashen, and Annie, looking so dignified in her grey suit and black and white blouse.

She shook hands and palely smiled as we filed out and down the path to the little green opposite.

So did Faith.

My little girl - a million years old and so small she was hardly there at all. So thin and white and elf-like, with all her hair cut off like a boy.

She floats into my mind's eye as she is now. A beautiful curvy mum, with luscious long rich brown hair. Her lovely kissy lips are the same as ever, and she kisses Isaac all the time. We all do, in our new roles. He has a magnetic smile. It shines out of his big, ocean-blue eyes.

*'I'm in heaven when you kiss me - can't you see it in my smile? . . . I could fall into a whole world of trouble over you.'*  
*sings a brother on the radio as I write . . .*

There are no coincidences - only signposts, indicating that you are following the path of the plan you formed before sending your little self down here into the world of crusty matter.

*'You cannot see the wood f or trees - Johnny, look around you, please.'* - a poem I read with Stella and Diana last week.

A slightly smaller, more intimate group of us made our way through thirty miles of sparkly frosted sunshiny day to Delton and the crematorium, where we sang hymns and it got more like a funeral than a party.

When the belt started to take him through the curtains and into the oven, Annie screamed out - 'NO!' and I agreed with her. She had been determined that they would all get through the funeral, and she made sure they did, beautifully, but now we were all allowed to let it all out.

Including Tony, who set off Rosie's phone in the middle of it all.

*'I see you being very upset coming out of a church . . .'* said a medium at Wearmouth.

Adam held me up as we went out at the end of the service. Phil had had to take Diana and Stella out already.

They had had enough.

We all had.

*'Why do I find it hard to write the next line? I know this much is true. This is the sound of my soul . . .'* and *'A love like ours could never die, as long as I have you near me . . .'* sing along in the background as the words come out.

In the minibus on the way home from Delton, I wonder why 'You are the Sunshine of my Life' was not on the playlist in church. And the next song on the driver's radio is . . . that warm chocolate bass-y intro tells us that it is, in fact, little Mr Wonder himself, singing the very thing.

Wow - Tony's got decks already, over there, and he is in charge of the soundtrack back here. Yeah!

*Billy is doing a Whoopee Goldberg with Faith, now I have managed to persuade her - with a little help from Rosie - that it's all right to come along to Jesmont. Billy has never done anything like this before, he says. It's different to standing on the platform telling people stuff, and it's got ladies in it, and he's very shy, but he holds her hands, standing facing her, and waits for Tony to come through; and he does.*

*She can feel Tony holding her hands.*

*It is HIS love energy flowing through Billy to her. Her eyes are closed and she is transported, and when she opens them again, she is transformed.*

*Billy told us then or some other time that Tony was jamming with a black man with glasses and an upside-down cross for an ear-ring.*

*Billy didn't recognize Curtis Mayfield, and he didn't know, like Faith did, that Curtis had gone ahead of Tony, arriving on the other side just before the end of 1999.*

*'I'm seeing some sort of thing - for baking but not made of the*

*stuff baking dishes are usually made of.*

*'It's rectangular with fluted - is that the word? - fluted edges.*

*'He says he really appreciated the home-cooking, He was a bit nervous of meeting the mother, he says - it's always a bit nerve-wracking, that; but he sends his love to you too. '*

That's my fish-dish, that's my fish-dish with the chocolate cake in it. *Que?*

*He also passed on a present, from Spirit, of oranges and sunflowers for Faith - she adores both - and gave a message about jam which was as cryptic as the trouser leg incident to those not present at the amusing soiree they all had at Rosie's the night before the crash. They had attempted to fix a broken kitchen stool with strawberry jam , AND . . . . paid respect to their dead homeys by rolling up their trouser legs.*

*At the end of the evening, Tony had called all his friends and family and told them how much he loved them, and goodnight . . .*

*One more interesting thing from Billy - he assured Faith that she would meet Tony again, in heaven.*

*He began to assure her that they would be together there, as a couple, but stopped and listened for a moment, then told her that she would in fact be with her husband whom she had not yet met. He talked about soul groups, and how people reincarnate within those groups - perhaps Tony would turn up again . . .*

## SEVEN

*Time passes and the days roll on  
Although the man she loved has gone,  
And mourning becomes morning for a while.  
She wrote to him of future birth,  
She laid his ashes on the earth.  
We wept for her, but he could make her smile.*

*We feared her heart was broken,  
Like his body on the road,  
And even he told me he was afraid.  
We had to get the message through -  
I knew that he was owed  
At least that for the magic he had made.*

*Although he's hidden from our sight,  
He speaks to us from fields of light.  
It sometimes feels as if he isn't gone.  
It makes me cry to think that he  
May just become a memory  
And all life's little thingummies go on.*

*He filled her world with sunshine,  
His love meant everything:  
Those little words sound trite, but it was real.  
We couldn't see for looking,  
Now for crying we can't smile.  
He showed us all exactly how to feel.*

*I understand forever now  
Because of what I've seen,  
My head's turned inside out, it feels quite odd.  
The sunshine that shone out of him;  
I know now what it means.  
That weekend we all saw a bit of God.*

That came out of the sky the evening before we were required

to write something - anything - inspired by Spirit, for the Awareness class, which I was now attending like mad.

We worked on picking up vibrations from the very old building we were meeting in, and we all got pictures of relevant and vivid things - a nursery with the children in clear focus - a lady, in a long brown dress, with a face I can still remember, and Amanda's rather special, ever-receding lines of spirit guides in all four corners, which I found a bit odd at the time - similarly Jean's Egyptian faces in the carpet in the tea-room.

Then it was the spirit-drawing lesson, and all my friends from over there appeared on my paper and said 'Hello!'. I got two handsome Native Americans - one bringing his daughter with him - several Egyptians and some E.T.'s for starters. Ahem.

I would get pictures and messages for myself and others, but feel less than confident about passing them on, for fear of ridicule or worse.

It moves through not wanting people to laugh at you for a loonie, to wanting to tell everyone, to reconsidering that notion, in the light of wider society's attitude; because there is institutional prejudice in this area, as there has always been.

THEY don't want it to become general knowledge that there is no death; that the only thing to fear - not only in facing death, but in any situation - is fear itself.

How then could they control people?

How could they manipulate the minds of people who know

that they are divine and live eternally?

How could they keep us down, willing to do anything for money so that our children could be fed, once we knew that we but only need to wish for whatever we need, and our universe, which is nothing but all of us spread out as the rapidly-cooling sparks flying off one huge sparkler, DOES supply it, for it can do no other. It is us, after all.

AFTER all?

Before ALL?

ALL the TIME?

We have but merely decided to take a little motor trip around the slow world of matter because the views are so lovely, the fruit tastes so delicious, and we would be wasting all that sunshine if we didn't give ourselves a chance to FEEL it on the outside of our skinny spacesuit.

They have tried to lock it away for so long, and they have covered it up so sneakily, depicting it ALMOST like it is, but ever so slightly skewed, so that the picture they present is convincing as long as you don't think about it.

Serious thought shows that the picture is confusing for a reason.

( Try it for yourself; try to keep a really important thing secret. You will have great difficulty, because you will be thinking about it as it truly is, so any lie you tell to cover it up will have elements of the secret in it. You will have to make up something similar to the truth so as not to contradict the

evidence. It is like trying to pretend to your nearest and dearest that you are not pregnant, if you are. How silly would that be? )

They suggest that only *they* have the secret, mystical keys, certain of which they may be prepared to hint at to us so that we can be 'saved' from our 'sins'; these 'sins' being, generally speaking, the breaking of the rules they have imposed to save us from ourselves and each other; for we are all, or so they try to convince us, fundamentally evil, or, at best, weak-minded, and can think of nothing but tickling our own and each other's rude bits, or getting as much stuff as we can for ourselves, regardless of the needs of others.

WE are 'BAD'; THEY can 'SAVE' us. Wow. Ultimate control over terrified people.

We know we are pregnant; they try to tell us we have cancer . . .

Naturally, then, they will be concerned if it all starts coming out, and the knowledge is no longer *esoteric* but *exoteric*, belonging to us all, to be used for the benefit of all, so that all can be healed and have abundance.

Naturally, they want to discredit those who wish to spread the knowledge, especially those who tell this truth to their children; hence the attacks on alternative education; hence a database of everything there is to know about everyone from birth on; hence the threat of the War on Terra ( hidden under the convenient cloak of Terror ) and the Enemy Within, as well as Without.

They make up the 'Religions' and then set them all against each

other.

They tell us all we should have one - the *right* one – and at the same time tell us that we have to respect the other people's 'religions', i.e. the different sets of rules - not the underlying Truths, which are, of course, all the SAME underlying TRUTH, for how could there be more than one?

It is hinted at in fairy tales - Cinderella's Fairy Godmother - or her real mother helping her from Spirit?

Beauty and the Beast - a woman telling the truth to a deluded, and consequently debased man?

Also in Narnia, and in Wells, Priestley, and much of Conan Doyle. I guess then, as now, it was difficult to get people to take it as fact, so it had to be sugared and served up as fiction.

I wanted to end this story with Part Seven, for, although Tony has been right around the rainbow, I can only see seven colours there.

Were I able to fly high enough, I would see it as a torus rather than as a flat arc going from the slower end of the visually perceptible range of vibrating 'energy' to the faster; i.e. outward from the red we associate with raw emotion as well as raw meat; through the restful green, coincidentally the colour of the planet's fur; through to the violet rays we sometimes call 'electricity', beyond which are the vibrating energy fields inhabited by those who have passed on from the world of 'matter' to the world of 'spirit'.

I could copy out all the events from the journal that Ella, Billy's friend, advised keeping, but I don't know how interesting that would keep on being to someone who wasn't there at the various times.

Though it did keep the ice-cream man interested for an unconscionably long time, when I went to buy lollies for the twins one day last summer and he asked me 'cos he'd been told something about it by someone.

I don't want to go on about myself, but I will go on. Faith is now recovered sufficiently to have settled down with Chris and given birth to the amazing Isaac.

*December before last; Rosie has arranged an evening of clairvoyance at her house, with a very impressive medium doing the readings. He tells me that I am looking to find which solar system I came from to be here at this time.*

*I am.*

*He tells me some more things about family and spirit work and such, and then he sees the handsome twenty three year old - with the blue eyes and the huge grin - who was taken too suddenly from us.*

*He sees him having woken up over there in a state of some shock, ('Duh? I didn't mean to be here . . .') wanting to help us, and being helped by us, and thanking ME for helping HIM on HIS journey!*

*The medium man says Tony is having trouble getting through to me at the moment. He says he is getting too excited about*

*something, and it will be easier in six months or so.*

*The following weekend, Faith tells me she is three months pregnant. I can now tell her about my dream of three months ago.*

*The action took place in an upstairs room - always a sign that it's a dream with a message. It was like my nana's house, with her big table covered with a plastic-coated table-cloth with a rose pattern. There was a pile of loose change, and Tony - for it was he - needed it - in his mouth! He was sitting on my knee, 'cos his legs wouldn't support him.*

*His body was see-through and not strong - yes - he was made of light!*

*Phil tried to give him an object like a large button without holes, made of some indeterminate material which looked like wood but was more like plastic of some kind. It was shaped sort of like a macaroon, or a Werther's Original, without the dimple, but about the same colour. In my dream, I told Phil not to cheat Tony; he needed silver coins, not buttons with no holes.*

*I told Phil about the dream in the morning, because it had been so vivid and affecting.*

*I had trouble describing the singular object, because it wasn't anything I could recognize. Phil said, 'But I found that thing when I had the dogs out at the park! I picked it up because I thought it was a button, but it had no holes.'*

On 7 July, Isaac – the sacrificial son - fought his way into the material world, weighing a stout nine pounds eleven ounces - 9.11 on 7.7., lest we forget - and we are all grateful for the manifestation from source of our dreams, come true. His grin is huge. His eyes are blue.

Now six months old, he smiles at everyone, even the grumpiest old men on the Metro, and if they don't smile back, he shouts at them with his tiny man's lungs until they do.

*At Rita's Physical Mediumship Workshop some seven years back; I am having a go at Transfiguration, and the audience sees a young man with a huge smile, superimposed on my face. Rita asks who he has come for, and he says, 'I know why I am here.'*

*So do I.*

*She asks if he has a message to give us, and he says, 'Be happy while you are here - and make others happy . . .'*

*I tell everybody about it - it is the most amazing thing that has ever happened to me!*

*Rosie warns me against telling Faith, but I do anyway, after her Grand-dad dies. She is fine with it. 'So Tony was my brother? He always seemed like a funny boyfriend . . .'*

Be happy, my grand son. You have always made others happy.

*'I only read it 'cos Chris bought it for me . . .', says the girl in*

*the afternoon play. Bloody radio . . .*

## RAINBOW'S END

There were more things from the journal that I wanted to include - like the road-maps moving about when we wanted to check the route to the funeral, and the twins' mitten-strings snapping themselves and *then tying themselves back together*, and stuff moving specially for Adam who, to this day, mocks me mercilessly - but decided against it. Knowing when to stop is always good.

This one's rather special, however, and I think it deserves its own little bit . . .

*It was a time some three years after Tony had gone; I'd fallen asleep doing some spirit drawing, and woke suddenly as if someone had come into the room. I knew that Tony was there, but was too tired to say anything to him. The radio was on, of course, and the continuity announcer said, 'How do you turn a duck into a soul singer? Leave it in the oven till it's Bill Withers!'*

*Obviously, you have to say it, not write it; like all puns, but we both laughed at it. He had obviously made me wake up to hear*

*it.*

*Two years later, Phil and I decided to go to Wearmouth one Saturday evening near Christmas, and I was pleased and surprised to see that Jean was taking the service. She said 'Hello' to us, and gave a great long message from Tony - she always likes passing on stuff from him, 'cos he's so cheeky.*

*'He's saying something about your Christmas dinner - are you having duck?*

*'Is anybody cooking duck?*

*I'm getting a picture of this duck and - it's - ugh - I don't know what's happened to it.*

*'He says don't cook it too long - but it's not burnt, it's all shrivelled up - sort of...'*

*'Withered?' I suggest, grinning.*

*What a clown!*

## PLAYLIST

Thank you to the following artists for their musical contributions to the soundtrack of Tony's continuing life:

ATHLETE  
BILL WITHERS  
CURTIS MAYFIELD  
BARRY WHITE  
EARTH, WIND AND FIRE  
MARVIN GAYE  
SAM AND DAVE  
GOMEZ  
RICHARD ASHCROFT and  
THE VERVE  
ISLEY BROTHERS  
REV AL GREEN  
ARTHUR LEE and LOVE  
AUDREY HEPBURN  
TIM BUCKLEY  
JUDY GARLAND  
STEVIE WONDER  
MASSIVE ATTACK

