

Chapter Seven

What's wrong Amy?

Brenda stands up as soon as she sees Amy walking out of the door. She rushes after her and asks her to stop but Amy keeps on walking. Everyone in the room turns to look at them and someone asks Tariq where they are going.

As they walk out of the room Brenda speaks quietly to Amy. When they get to the reception area, she tells Amy to sit down on the chair near the front door.

"What's wrong Amy?" Brenda asks her as they sit down, "has someone upset you?"

Amy is quietly crying while Brenda is talking to her and she is still holding Amy's hand when Jessie walks up to them.

"Are you alright Amy?" Jessie asks her as she sits down next to them.

Amy looks at Brenda and then at Jessie, but she is too scared to say anything.

"What's wrong Amy?" Brenda asks her again. "Everyone is worried about you."

"I don't know" Amy tells her "I don't know, I don't know. Leave me alone!"

Jessie tells them they can sit in reception for as long as they want. Brenda holds on to Amy's hand and tells her she will do whatever Amy wants.

“Don’t be upset Amy, I don’t like it when you’re upset,”
Brenda tells her.

Amy looks at the floor and then she looks at Brenda. She tells Brenda she will go back to the meeting if she can sit next to her.

“Come on then Amy. You can sit next to me, can’t she Jessie?” Brenda says.

As they walk back into the room, Amy looks at the floor. She does not want to look at anyone in case she starts to get upset again. Her head is jumbled up with lots of thoughts as she walks into the room holding Brenda’s hand.

Amy is thinking about Bill who came to her house this morning and she is worried. She does not want to think about him because she knows Brenda will be angry when she finds out she gave Bill all their house keeping money? This was the money they had budgeted to buy their food for next week.

Every time Amy thinks about Bill she gets upset.

All through the rest of the meeting, Amy sits next to Brenda. She can feel everyone looking at her. At the end of the meeting people come up to her and ask her what is wrong.

Amy is glad that Brenda is there because Brenda tells everyone that Amy is okay, so please don’t bother her. Amy can’t even look at Gary when he comes to speak to her so she turns away. Brenda tells Gary she doesn’t know what is wrong with Amy, but she will find out later.

As Amy and Brenda leave the meeting, Gary feels sad and hopes he will see Amy again soon.

As soon as Brenda and Amy get home, Amy goes up to her room and closes her bedroom door. She sits on the floor and puts her hands on the bedroom wall because the walls feel nice and cold and this makes her feel calm. But then she hears Brenda coming up the stairs.

“Amy, Amy, Amy!” Brenda shouts. “Open your door and speak to me!”

Amy puts her hands over her ears because Brenda is making her feel stressed. She gets up and chooses her favourite CD before getting into bed and pulling the covers over her head.

Amy can't hear Brenda now.

After a while Brenda goes back downstairs and thinks about what she should do. Perhaps she should phone Jackie their support worker or perhaps she should phone Amy's mum.

Brenda is worried about Amy. The last time Amy was like this was when the group of girls in town upset her.

Perhaps Amy saw the girls again and that's why she is upset? Brenda goes into the kitchen to make herself a drink. She knows that Amy won't come out of her room tonight and the best thing she can do wait until the morning.

Just as Brenda is about to sit down and watch T.V. with her drink, there is a loud knock on the door.

Brenda asks you this

Why did Amy walk out of the meeting?

Why did Amy want to sit next to me?

What did I say to people who asked what was wrong with Amy?

Why did Amy play her music?

Who do you think knocked on the door?

Chapter 8

Jack has a plan

Gary is still thinking about Amy as he gets dressed on Friday morning. Last night as he walked back from the Stronger Voices meeting, he went to talk to Amy. When he knocked on the door of 81 Magnolia Street, he was not happy when Brenda opened it.

“What do you want, Gary?” Brenda asked him when she opened the door.

Gary told her that he wanted to speak to Amy to ask her why she was upset. Brenda stood behind the front door and shouted at him. She told Gary to go away and that Amy was in her room and wasn't talking to anyone. When Gary looked at Brenda he couldn't think of anything else to say so he walked back home.

This morning Gary has been up very early and now he is almost ready to go out. He goes to the Bluebells garden group on a Tuesday, Thursday and Friday where he works in the potting shed. Jack works at Bluebells too, but Jack doesn't go to Bluebells on a Friday.

Before Gary leaves the house, he checks his cupboards are tidy and that no one has touched his things. Jason and Danny are Gary's support workers and they are the only people who Gary will let come into his flat. His mum and dad and brother Ben, often come to his flat but Jack has never visited Gary's flat.

Before Gary goes out he picks up the Dr Who magazine he bought this week. He already knows what the pictures are on each page.

When he has looked through all the pages, Gary puts it in the drawer with all his other Dr Who magazines. There are so many Dr Who magazines in this drawer he will soon have to find somewhere else to put them.

Gary checks his talking watch on to find out what time it is. Then he puts his coat on and makes sure he has a spare battery in his pocket for his hearing aid. Sometimes the battery needs changing so Gary needs to make sure he has a spare one. If he didn't have his hearing aid, Gary would not be able to hear what people are saying.

As Gary picks up his mobile phone from the table, he looks around the room to check everything is tidy. Just as he is about to open the front door his mobile phone rings.

Gary answers his phone and is happy when he hears Jack's voice. He sits down on his chair again and listens to what Jack has to say. When Gary tells Jack that Brenda wouldn't let him speak to Amy last night, Jack says he has a plan.

"Why don't we ask Brenda and Amy if they would like to come to the Golden Lion pub tonight? We could meet them there at 6 O'clock after I've had my tea. Then we could ask Amy why she got upset."

"That's a good idea," Gary tells Jack, "I'll go to their house this afternoon on my way home from Bluebells. Bye."

As he switches his phone off, Gary hears shouting outside. When he looks out of the window, he sees his next-door neighbour.

He watches as the lady who lives next door walks along the path with her two children. It looks like the little boy is not happy as he is shouting and jumping up and down. As the boy runs off down the street, Gary looks down Magnolia Street and he thinks about Amy, again.

Walking to his front door, Gary checks again that he has everything he needs before he goes outside. He puts his key in his pocket and then looks up the street at the railway bridge.

The railway bridge is near to the house where Amy and Brenda live and he hopes they will both come to the Golden Lion pub tonight.

Jack asks you this

Which days does Gary go to Bluebells?

What was the name of the magazine Gary reads?

What did I say to Gary when I phoned him?

Do you think my plan will work?

What do you think will happen next?