



Breaking Bad News

Hearing Bad News: Sudden Death

Rosie's Mum:

It was getting quite late, well after 1030, and I was beginning to get worried. Rosie was never late – always back at the time she said... and I was starting to think that something might have happened. By 1130, I was very agitated. Bob, my husband, was away – so I didn't have anyone to share this with. I'd called Rosie and texted, but no answer.

Then, the door bell rang – and I felt my stomach sink. But, as I went to answer the door I thought, 'It's Rosie, she's just forgotten her key'. Looking back now, it was me being hopeful really.

There was a policeman at the door and I knew immediately that something was horribly wrong. He asked me if I was the mother of Rosie Brown and I said, 'Yes'. He asked if he could come in.

He looked very serious and was really nervous – and I wanted to stop him saying what he was going to say, 'cos I knew it was bad news.

He asked me to sit down and also asked if I was alone – the sense of dread welling up inside me just kept getting stronger. Inside a voice was screaming, 'She's had an accident but she'll be alright.' Then, 'Oh please don't let it be bad, please...'

I remember that he cleared his throat then said, 'Mrs Brown, prepare yourself for a shock. I have some really bad news about Rosie.'

I just stared at him – willing him not to say the worst.

Then he did say the worst thing he could say, 'Rosie's been in a car accident – she's been taken to hospital, but I'm afraid she didn't make it. Mrs. Brown, Rosie died on the way to hospital. Her injuries were really severe.'

I could hear the clock ticking then my own voice saying, 'No, No, No – it can't be true, there's been a mistake. Not my Rosie, no..! I must see her – I must be with her!'

He didn't say anything – just came and sat beside me – put his hand on my shoulder and I sobbed. When I looked at him he was crying too. That mattered to me.