

Dr Brunner was a big man. He was about fifty-six, with grey hair and a calm face.

'Could you please tell me the name of the person who will get my father's money?' Charlie asked politely.

'I'm sorry. I cannot tell you that.' Just like Mooney.

'Why is it a secret?' Charlie left his chair and went over to stand by the window. 'Is this person . . . an old girlfriend of Dad's?'

From the window, Charlie could see the old Buick. Susanna was sitting in the back, enjoying the afternoon sun. A small man, carrying a bag, moved towards the car. He walked in a strange way, moving from side to side.

'Mr Babbitt, I knew your father from the time you were two years old,' Dr Brunner said softly.

Charlie turned. 'The year my mother died,' he said quickly.

'Yes,' said Brunner. 'Now, the will names me as the person to look after the money. But this hospital and I get none of that money. I am doing this for your father.'

Charlie was beginning to feel very angry. To calm himself, he turned back to the window. The man with the bag was now standing next to the Buick. 'And you want me to just forget about the money?'

'I think you have been upset,' Brunner said softly, 'by a man who never knew how to show love.'

Charlie knew that this was true. He did not know what to say. Outside, the man was taking a small notebook out of his bag. He began writing in it.

'I understand how you feel,' Dr Brunner continued. 'But there's nothing I can do.'

'I'll fight for my money, Dr Brunner,' Charlie said.

Dr Brunner got up from his chair. 'I'm sure you are a fighter, Mr Babbitt,' he said. 'Your father was a fighter. But I am a fighter too.'

Dr Brunner walked with Charlie out through the front door. The day was getting hotter, but it was still beautiful weather.

The little man with the bag was still standing by the Buick. He was writing in his notebook. Again and again he looked from the car back to the notebook. He did not look at Susanna.

'Raymond,' said Dr Brunner, 'go back inside.'

The man with the notebook was not listening. He continued writing in the notebook. Charlie walked past him and went to open the door.

'Of course, this car is not white,' Raymond said. He did not look up from his notebook. 'This is a blue car now . . .'

Charlie looked at Raymond in surprise. He was a small man of about forty. He looked clean and tidy, with short hair and very ordinary clothes. What was a little strange was that there was no expression on his face. There was no light in his small black eyes, and no movement in his mouth. It was a face that was neither happy nor sad.

Smiling, Charlie turned to Susanna. 'You know,' he said slowly, 'this car *was* white. My dad painted it blue when I was very little.'

'And, and,' Raymond continued quickly to himself, '. . . it cost an *arm* and a *leg*.'

The smile left Charlie's face. 'That's what my father often said - "an arm and a leg". How does this man know that?' he asked.

Charlie looked at the man called Raymond. Raymond looked up for a second. Then he looked at his notebook again.

'You come with me, Raymond,' Dr Brunner said. 'These people have to go.'

But Charlie was moving closer to Raymond. 'Do you know this car?' he asked.



Raymond began writing in his notebook and muttering to himself.

A frightened expression came across Raymond's face. He looked at Dr Bruner for help. 'I . . . don't . . . know,' he muttered.

'Yes, you do know this car!' Charlie said angrily. 'Why do you know?'

'That's enough, Mr Babbitt,' Dr Bruner said. 'You're upsetting him. You're—'

'Charlie, please,' Susanna said.

Now Raymond looked from Susanna to Dr Bruner. He began writing in his notebook and muttering to himself.

'Babbitt Charlie. Charlie . . . Babbitt. Charlie Babbitt. 1961 Beechcrest Avenue.'

Charlie was astonished. 'How do you know that address?' he asked.

Dr Bruner spoke quietly. 'Because he's your brother,' he said. 'But I don't *have* a brother,' the astonished Charlie said. 'I *never* had a brother.'

Chapter 4 Raymond

Charlie and Dr Bruner walked through the flower garden and talked together. Susanna sat with Raymond, who was still writing in his notebook.

'What can I tell you?' the doctor asked.

'Where to begin?' What does he write in that notebook?'

'He writes down things that he thinks are dangerous. Things like bad weather reports.'

'Why does he do that?'

'I think he writes dangerous things down to try and hide them. Raymond sees danger everywhere. Any change frightens him. That is why he always does things in the same way every day.'

'What do you mean?'

'Raymond always eats the same way, sleeps the same way, talks the same way. Everything. But he's a person, your brother. In some ways, a very intelligent person.'

Dr Bruner looked at Charlie for a second or two, then he continued. 'Raymond cannot have relationships with other people, and he cannot see the relationship between things. He talks to you, but he also talks to the car and the television. Everything is the same to him. Doctors call this sort of person autistic.' *

* An autistic person lives in a special world inside himself. In some ways, he thinks like a very young child, and like a child he needs other people to help him live in the real world. But some autistic people can also do very special things. One of the best painters of buildings in the world is autistic.

Charlie thought about this. It was difficult to understand.

'And the most important thing is that Raymond can't *feel*. He cannot be happy or sad in the way that we are happy or sad.'

Dr Bruner stopped speaking and looked at Charlie. Charlie was biting his lip and looking over at his brother.

'What Raymond did with you today . . . that was very good,' Dr Bruner said softly. 'Very good. For a stranger.'

Charlie shook his head and laughed. 'The world is strange,' he said. 'Three million dollars! What's he going to spend it on?'



It was late afternoon. Charlie was walking with Raymond. Susanna waited in the car. She thought that Charlie was saying goodbye to his new brother.

Charlie walked quickly towards the Buick. Raymond walked next to him.

'This is Daddy's car,' Raymond said. 'It was white. But now this is a blue car.'

Charlie got into the Buick. 'Get in, Raymond,' he said. Raymond got into the car.

'Charlie, wait a minute!' Susanna said. 'Where are we taking him?'

'For a holiday,' Charlie said. He started the car and they drove away. Raymond looked back over his shoulder at the house that they were leaving. There was no expression on his face, but it was very clear that he was anxious.

'Don't worry, Raymond,' Susanna told him, 'you're coming back.'

Charlie said nothing.

Chapter 5 TV and Pizza

They drove back to Cincinnati. Raymond sat in the back of the Buick and watched the road go by. He said nothing to Charlie or Susanna, but muttered strange things to himself.

They went to a hotel, and took two rooms. Charlie showed Raymond his room.

'This is your room, Ray,' he said.

That was a big mistake.

Raymond looked around the room. 'This is *not* my room,' he said. There was a frightened expression on his face. 'This is . . . is not my room.'

'Just for tonight,' Charlie said.

'Until we take you home,' Susanna said.

But Raymond was very upset now. He was shaking his head from side to side and muttering to himself. 'Of course, I'm going to be here a *long* time. A *very* long time . . . Of course, they moved my *bed*.'

'Sorry, Raymond,' Charlie said. 'You like the bed under the window.' He started pushing the bed into its new place.

But Raymond was still unhappy. He started muttering about books. The only book in the room was a telephone book for Cincinnati.

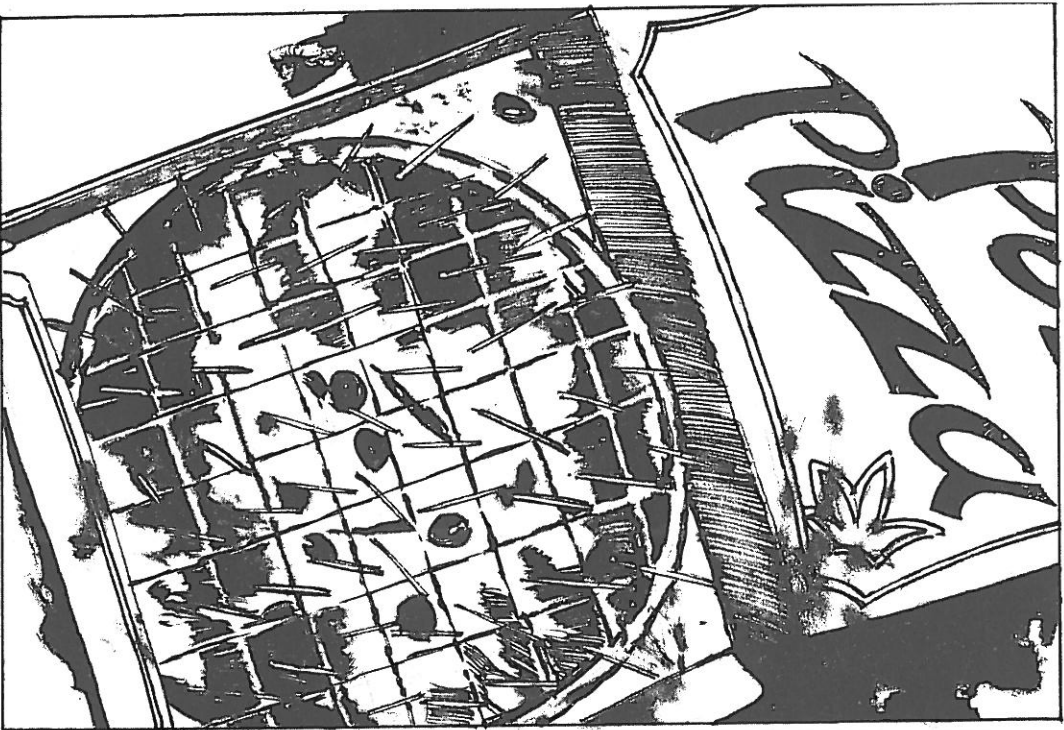
'Charlie, let's take him home,' Susanna said. She liked Raymond, and she did not like to see him upset.

'He's OK,' Charlie said. 'Do you like pizza, Ray?'

'Do you like pizza, Charlie Babbitt?' Raymond knew the word 'pizza' because 'pizza' was a Wallbrook word. This calmed him a little.

'I'll ask the hotel to send a pizza up to your room,' Charlie said. 'We like pizza, don't we, Ray? We're brothers.'

'Charlie, he still doesn't look happy,' Susanna said. 'I don't



Charlie cut the pizza into tiny squares for him, and put each square on a toothpick.

understand why you brought him here. I think he wants to go back to Wallbrook.'

'Ray's fine,' Charlie said, 'all he needs is some TV and some pizza. What's on TV, Ray?'

Raymond looked at his watch. 'The Lucky Money Wheel,' he told the watch.

'Great. Sit down, and you can watch it.'

Charlie turned on the television. *The Lucky Money Wheel* came on.

'You've got your TV,' Charlie said. 'You've got a pizza coming. Aren't things good, Ray?'

Charlie looked at Raymond and Raymond looked at Charlie, but there was no expression on his face.

'Do you ever smile, Ray?' Charlie asked.

'Do you ever smile?' Raymond repeated. There was still no expression on his face.



Raymond sat on his bed and watched television. Charlie came in with a pizza.

Ray looked at the pizza and shook his head. 'What's the problem, Ray?' Charlie asked.

Raymond wanted to eat the pizza the way that he ate it at Wallbrook. Charlie cut the pizza into tiny squares for him, and put each square on a toothpick.

Charlie and Susanna went off to their room. Raymond watched a film. A man in the film told his son to turn the television off. Raymond got up and turned *his* television off.

Raymond continued to look at the television, but now there was nothing to watch. He heard the sound of another television in Charlie and Susanna's room. Raymond got up and went into their room.

Charlie and Susanna were in bed. They did not see Raymond

come into the room. Raymond sat on the end of the bed and watched the television.

Susanna saw him first. 'Charlie,' she said, in a quiet voice. 'Raymond is sitting at the end of the bed.'

Charlie sat up and saw that Raymond was watching TV and eating pizza. 'Raymond, what are you doing in here?' he shouted. 'Get out!'

Raymond got up and went back to his room. Susanna looked at Charlie with an angry expression on her face. 'Go and talk to him!' she said.

'What for?' Charlie asked.

'Because he's frightened,' Susanna said. 'He's never been away from Wallbrook before. You've upset him!'

Charlie got angry. 'Raymond is not going back to Wallbrook,' he said. 'He has to learn how to live in the real world.'

Susanna was astonished. 'What do you mean he's not going back to Wallbrook?'

Charlie looked away from her and bit his lip. 'I took Raymond,' he said quietly, 'and I'm keeping him until I get my money.'

Susanna's eyes widened. 'What money?' she asked.

'Dad left Ray some money. A lot of money.'

Money! Now Susanna was beginning to understand. 'How much money . . . did . . . your . . . father . . . leave Raymond?' she asked angrily.

Charlie looked away again. 'He left him his house and all his money,' he said. 'Three million dollars.'

Susanna muttered some angry words in Italian and jumped out of bed. Then she picked up her suitcase from the floor and threw it open.

'What are you doing?' Charlie asked.

'I'm leaving you, Charlie.' She was coldly angry.



'I'm leaving you, Charlie.' Susanna was coldly angry. She pushed her things into the suitcase.

Now Charlie was astonished. 'Why?' he asked.

Susanna pushed her things into the suitcase and pulled on her coat. 'Because you've kidnapped your brother for money,' she shouted.

'I have not kidnapped him! I just want my money. What's wrong with that?'

'Everything!' Susanna shouted. She looked at Charlie for a second and shook her head. Then she picked up her suitcase and moved towards the door. When she got to the door, she turned and looked at Charlie again. 'I did love you, Charlie,' she said sadly. 'But you are not the man that I thought you were.'

Chapter 6 Toothpicks

The next morning Charlie took Raymond to have breakfast in a cheap restaurant near their hotel.

A pretty waitress came to their table. 'Good morning,' she said.

Raymond read the girl's name on the front of her dress. 'Sally Dibbs,' he said suddenly. '460192.'

Sally Dibbs was astonished. 'How do you know my telephone number?' she asked.

Charlie was also astonished. He looked at Sally and then at Raymond.

'How do you know her number, Raymond?' he asked.

'The telephone book,' Raymond muttered. 'In the hotel. The telephone book.'

'You read the telephone book?' Charlie said. He turned to the waitress and laughed. 'He remembers things,' he said. Then he asked Raymond what he wanted for breakfast.

'This is Tuesday,' Raymond said. 'Breakfast is coffee and cakes.'

'That's fine,' Charlie said to the waitress. 'We'll have coffee and cakes.'

The waitress went to get the food. Suddenly, an anxious expression came across Raymond's face. 'Where are the toothpicks?' he asked.

'We don't need toothpicks for cakes,' Charlie said.

Raymond shook his head from side to side. 'Where are the toothpicks?' he repeated. 'Where are the toothpicks?'

Charlie closed his eyes and counted to ten. 'All right, Raymond,' he said. 'I'll get you some toothpicks. But I'm also going to make a phone call. I want you to wait for me here.'

Charlie was on the phone. 'Dr Bruner, this is Charlie Babbitt.'

Dr Bruner was silent for a second. Then he asked calmly, 'Where are you, son?'

'That's not important,' Charlie said. 'What is important is who I'm with.'

'You have to bring Raymond back, Mr Babbitt,' the doctor said.

'Yes, I will,' Charlie said. 'When I get my one and a half million dollars, sir. All I want is my half of the money.'

'I can't do that, Mr Babbitt. You know I can't.'

Charlie turned to watch Raymond. He wasn't at their table! Then he saw him: Raymond was looking all round the restaurant. He still did not have his toothpicks.

'Bring him back, Mr Babbitt,' Dr Bruner repeated. 'Bring him back now.'

'I have not kidnapped him,' Charlie said. This was something which worried him. Was Susanna right? Was Charlie the Businessman now? Charlie the Criminal?

'I know you haven't kidnapped him,' Dr Bruner said. 'Raymond is not a prisoner at Wallbrook. He's always free to leave us.'

Charlie breathed more easily.

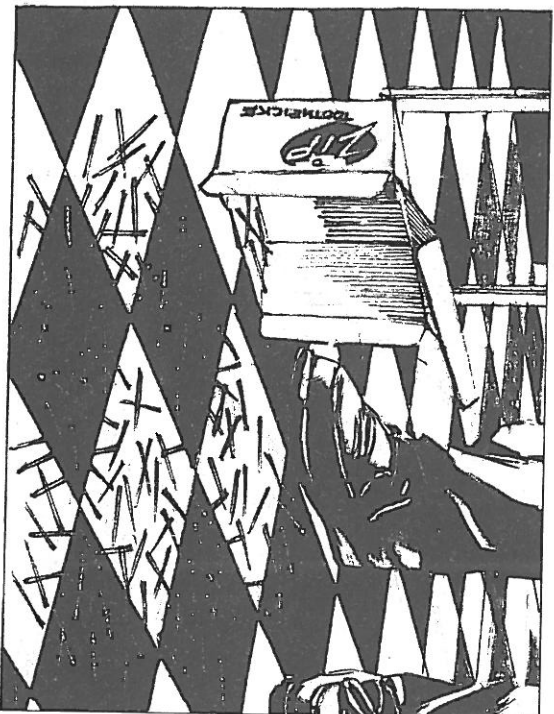
'But we know how to look after Raymond here,' Dr Bruner continued. 'We know what he needs. You do not know anything about Raymond, Mr Babbitt.'

Raymond was still looking round the restaurant for toothpicks. Charlie watched him anxiously.

'I'm Raymond's brother,' Charlie said into the phone, 'and my lawyer says I can get custody of him. If you want Raymond back, give me my money.'

'It's not your money, Mr Babbitt,' the doctor was saying.

Charlie was not listening. He was waving to the waitress.



Raymond stood up quickly and knocked the box of toothpicks off the table. The box fell to the floor and broke open.

'Toothpicks!' he shouted and he pointed at Raymond. 'He wants toothpicks!'

'I cannot give you what you want, Mr Babbit,' Dr Bruner continued.

At last Sally gave Raymond a full box of toothpicks. Raymond took the box back to their table.

Charlie was getting angry. 'Dr Bruner, you've made a big mistake!' he said. He put the phone down and walked over to where Raymond was sitting. 'We're leaving, Raymond.'

Raymond stood up quickly and knocked the box of toothpicks off the table. The box fell to the floor and broke open. The toothpicks went everywhere.

'Oh, Raymond!' Charlie shouted.

But Raymond was looking down at the toothpicks on the

floor. 'Eighty-two,' he muttered. 'Eighty-two, eighty-two eighty-two. Toothpicks.'

Charlie shook his head. 'Ray, there's a lot more than eighty-two toothpicks down there.'

Raymond's expression didn't change. 'Eighty-two, eighty-two, eighty-two. Of course that's two hundred and forty-six. Toothpicks.'

Charlie turned to Sally Dibbs. 'How many toothpicks in the box?' he asked.

The girl picked up the box and read the number off it. 'Two hundred and fifty.'

Charlie smiled at his brother. 'That was very close, Raymond,' he said. 'Come on, let's go. We're going to the airport. I have to go back to Los Angeles.'

As they walked to the door, Sally Dibbs called after them.

'He was right! There were two hundred and forty-six toothpicks on the floor. The other four are still in the box.'



At the airport Charlie telephoned his office. The news was not good. Both the bank and the customer for the Lamborghini cars were still very unhappy. Charlie needed to get back to Los Angeles fast.

Charlie picked up his bag. 'OK, Raymond,' he said. 'We've got to move quickly. Our plane leaves in six minutes. Look, there it is out there.'

Charlie pointed out through the window at the plane. Raymond suddenly looked very anxious.

'Crash,' he muttered. 'That plane . . . crashed in August. August 16, 1987. One hundred and fifty-six people were . . . They were all . . .'

'That was a different plane, Ray,' Charlie said. 'This is a beautiful plane. This one is safe.'



'Crash,' he muttered. 'That plane . . . crashed in August. August 16, 1987. One hundred and fifty-six people were . . . They were all . . .'

'Crash,' Raymond muttered. 'Crash and burn.'

Charlie did not know what to do. They had only four minutes to catch the plane. 'We have to fly home, Ray,' he said. 'It's important. What did you think we were doing here? This is an airport. This is where they keep the planes! Come on!'

Charlie put his hand on Raymond's arm. Raymond put his hand to his mouth and bit it. Then he screamed and began to shake all over.

For a second, Charlie just looked at his brother with an astonished expression. Then he saw that he had to calm Raymond down. 'It's OK, Raymond,' he said quickly. 'It's OK. We'll drive to Los Angeles. It will take three days, but we'll drive. No planes.'

Raymond stopped screaming. His body stopped shaking and slowly the anxious expression left his face.

'I'm sorry, Raymond,' Charlie said softly. 'I'm sorry I upset you.'

Charlie turned and began walking out of the airport. A second later Raymond followed him.

Chapter 7 Rain Man

Charlie drove all through the night. He felt tired and anxious. He needed to get back to Los Angeles fast to try and save his business. He was losing time that he did not have.

The next evening they stopped at a hotel. Their room had a small bathroom. Charlie went in to have a bath. Raymond was cleaning his teeth, and his mouth was full of toothpaste.

'Don't use so much toothpaste, Ray!' Charlie said.

But Raymond continued cleaning his teeth. Toothpaste came out of his mouth and dropped on to his shirt.

'Will you stop that, Ray?' Charlie said.

Raymond did not stop. 'You like it, Charlie Babbitt,' he muttered.

Charlie shook his head. 'No, I do *not* like it!' he shouted.

'You say, "Funny Rain Man . . . funny teeth."'

Suddenly Charlie stopped shouting. *Funny Rain Man*. Rain

Man! That was the name of his secret friend when he was a child.

'What did you say?' he asked.

'You can't say Raymond,' his brother said. 'You're a baby. You say, "Rain Man". "Funny Rain Man".'

Charlie sat down on the side of the bath. He didn't know what to think. He was finding it difficult to breathe. 'You . . . you're the Rain Man?' Charlie said finally.

Raymond put his hand in his pocket and pulled out an

envelope. He opened the envelope and carefully took out a small photograph.

Charlie took the photograph and looked at it. A young man of about eighteen was looking at the camera, but not smiling. He was holding a baby in his arms. The baby was Charlie Babbitt, and the young man was Raymond Babbitt.

'Daddy took the picture,' Raymond said.

Charlie looked at the photograph for a long time. He was astonished. He and Raymond. Charlie and Raymond. Charlie and the Rain Man.

'And you . . . lived with us then? When . . . did you leave us?'

'It was Thursday,' Raymond said.

'Which Thursday, Ray?'

'It was snowing outside. Maria stayed with you when Daddy took me to my home. January 21st, 1965. On a Thursday.'

'That's when our mother died,' Charlie breathed softly. 'Just after New Year.'

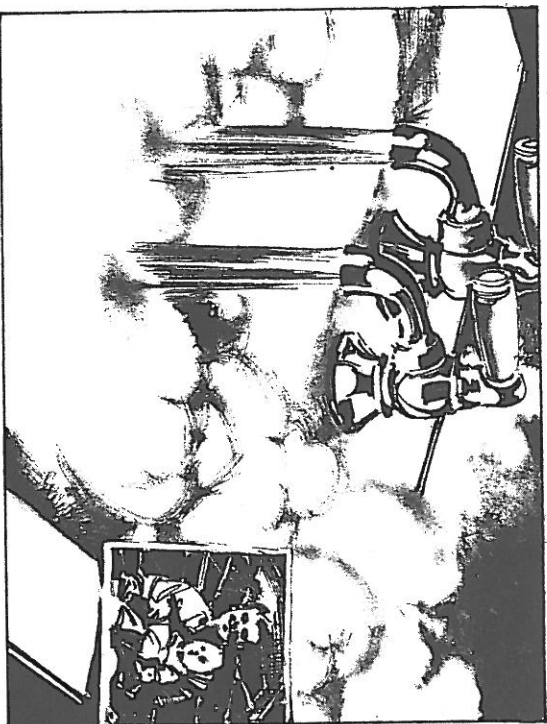
'And you had your coat. And you waved to me from the window. Goodbye, Rain Man. Goodbye, Rain Man. On a Thursday.' Suddenly Charlie remembered deep into his past. He remembered the snow. And waving to Rain Man. And later crying. Crying for Rain Man. He wanted Rain Man, but Raymond didn't come. He never came again.

'I sat with that coat,' Charlie said. Now he remembered his brother's eighteen-year-old face. 'And you sang to me.'

For a minute Raymond just looked at his brother. Then, very softly, he began to sing a song by The Beatles.

When Raymond finished singing, Charlie moved closer to him. Then he said, 'I remember I liked it. When you sang to me.'

But Raymond was cleaning his teeth again. Charlie picked up the photograph and muttered something about how nice it was. Then he put it down on the side of the bath and turned on the water.



Charlie put the photograph on the side of the bath and turned on the water. Suddenly Raymond began to scream.

Suddenly Raymond began to scream. 'No, no, no, no!' Charlie looked up and saw a terrible expression on his brother's face. Raymond was looking down at the water. 'It's BURNING him!' he screamed.

Quickly, Charlie turned off the water. He remembered it all now. His brother giving a two-year-old boy a bath that was too hot. Sanford Babbitt screaming, 'He's burning Charlie! He's going to kill him!'

That was why his father sent Raymond to Wallbrook. That was the end of the relationship between Charlie and Rain Man. And poor Raymond remembered it all.

'It's OK, Ray,' Charlie said softly to his brother. 'It's OK, man. I didn't burn. I'm fine.'

◆

It was late. Raymond was sleeping on one of the two beds in the hotel room. Charlie lay on the other bed, and smoked a cigarette. He felt very tired and very sad. He needed someone to love. Someone who loved him. He needed Susanna.

Charlie pulled the telephone towards him.

'Hello?'

'Hello, it's me, Charlie,' he said softly.

There was no answer.

'I . . . I just want to hear . . . that our relationship is not . . .'

Charlie waited for Susanna to say something. When she still did not speak, he said, 'I'm frightened that it's finished between us.'

Finally, Susanna spoke. 'Don't ask me today, Charlie. You won't like my answer. Give me some time.'

'I'm . . . going to get custody of Ray. I've talked to my lawyer and he says that it is possible. Firstly, I have to take Ray to see a special doctor in Los Angeles.'

'Charlie, they won't give you custody of Ray,' Susanna said. 'Dr Bruner has looked after him for more than twenty years. You've known him for four days.'

She didn't understand. Nobody understood his relationship with Raymond. 'Can I phone you when I get back to Los Angeles?' Susanna didn't say yes, but she didn't say no either.

Chapter 8 Las Vegas

The next morning Charlie heard more bad news from the office. They were taking the Lamborghinis away. And Charlie had very little money left. He was paying for everything with his American Express card.

Charlie and Ray sat together in the hotel restaurant. At the next table there was a group of twenty businessmen. They were finishing their meal and asked the waitress for the bill.

Raymond looked over at the table. It was full of plates and cups and different bits of food.

'Of course that bill is ninety-three dollars, forty,' Raymond said.

Charlie laughed. 'How can you know that, Ray?'

'Ninety-three dollars, forty,' Raymond repeated.

The waitress returned with the bill. Charlie read over her shoulder. The bill was for ninety-three dollars, forty.

'How do you do it, Ray? Charlie asked. 'You can remember every number in a phone book. You can count two hundred toothpicks in under a second. You're like a computer.'

'Today is Thursday,' Raymond said. 'Thursday is coffee and cakes. Same as Tuesday.'

Charlie looked at his brother. Suddenly he had an idea. A really great idea to end all his money problems.

'Raymond,' he asked his brother. 'Have you ever played cards?'



The next day they arrived in Las Vegas. Charlie bought new suits for Raymond and himself. He also bought Raymond a television the size of a small clock. Then he showed his brother how to play cards.

'Do you understand how to play now, Raymond?'

'I count cards,' said Raymond.

'Yes, but you must *never* say that.'

They went into the Golden Casino at four o'clock in the afternoon. They sat down at one of the card tables. Five hours later they got up from the card table. Charlie was very, very tired, but very happy.

He smiled at his brother. 'Raymond, you have won us ninety thousand dollars.'

Raymond did not look up from the television he now carried