

CAMBRIDGE

Cambridge University Press
978-84-832-3809-7 – Quick Change!
Margaret Johnson
Excerpt
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CAMBRIDGE



Cambridge
Discovery
Readers

Quick Change!

Margaret Johnson



People in the story

Helen: a twelve-year-old girl

Mum: Helen's mother

Dad: Helen's father

Auntie Carol: Helen's aunt

Joe: a bad man

Frank: another bad man

BEFORE YOU READ



- 1** Look at the pictures in Chapter 1 and *People in the story*.
What do you think? Answer the questions.

1 What does Helen's dad drive?

.....

2 Is the baby Helen?

.....

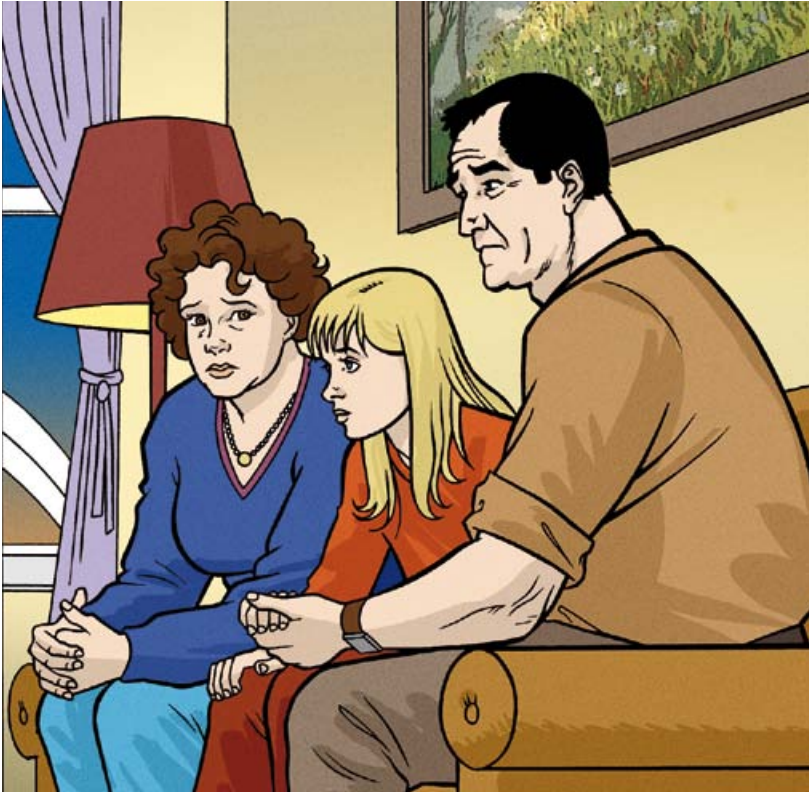
Chapter 1

My twelfth birthday

Listen. I've got an interesting story. It's about me. Where do I start?

OK, I know. My birthday. My twelfth birthday. My mother and father want to talk to me.

My mum and dad smile a lot. They're happy people. But they aren't smiling today.



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‘We love you, Helen,’ Mum tells me.

‘Yes,’ Dad says. ‘We love you very much.’

‘But, Helen ... we must tell you something,’ Mum says.

I look at Mum. I don’t understand.

‘What?’ I say.

Dad holds my hand. He looks into my eyes.

‘We love you, Helen. You’re our daughter. But ... you’re our adoptive¹ daughter.’

There is a noise in my ears. Someone’s shouting. It’s me.

‘No!’

‘Please, Helen,’ Mum says.

Dad takes something from the table and gives it to me.

‘Please. Read this,’ he says.



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‘I’m driving the taxi when I hear something. Something in the taxi. I stop to look. And I see you.’

He smiles. ‘You’re crying and you’re angry. But you’re very beautiful too. Just one look, Helen. One look and I love you.’



I look at them.

‘But who am I?’ I ask. ‘Who are my ...’

‘Your birth parents?’ Dad says sadly. ‘We don’t know.
No one knows.’

He gives me something. ‘This is yours, Helen,’ he
says. ‘I think it comes from ... them.’



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I look at it. ‘From my birth parents?’ I ask.

‘Yes.’

‘What is it?’ I ask.

‘A baby blanket,’ he tells me.

Mum takes my hand now. ‘Please don’t be sad,’ she says. ‘We love you, Helen. We aren’t your birth parents, but that doesn’t change anything.’

But she’s wrong.

LOOKING BACK

- 1 Check your answers to *Before you read* on page 4.

ACTIVITIES

- 2 Complete the sentences about Chapter 1 with the names in the box.

Helen (x3)	Mum (x2)	Dad	Mum and Dad
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- 1 It's Helen's birthday.
 - 2 is twelve today.
 - 3 Helen doesn't understand what her says.
 - 4 is shouting.
 - 5 gives Helen a baby blanket.
 - 6 love Helen.
 - 7 is wrong.
- 3 Who do the underlined words refer to in these lines from the text?
- 1 They're happy people. (page 5) ...Mum and Dad...
 - 2 But they aren't smiling today. (page 5)
 - 3 He smiles. (page 7)
 - 4 I look at them. (page 8)
 - 5 'I think it comes from ... them.' (page 8)
 - 6 'Please don't be sad,' she says. (page 9)

4 Underline the correct words in each sentence.

- 1 This is an interesting story about Helen / Helen's mum and dad.
- 2 Helen hears a noise in her head / ears.
- 3 Helen / Dad reads about the baby.
- 4 Helen's dad finds a baby in / behind the taxi.
- 5 Helen's mum and dad know / don't know about her birth parents.
- 6 Dad looks / doesn't look happy when Helen asks about her birth parents.
- 7 The baby blanket is from Helen's birth parents / adoptive parents.

5 Match the questions with the answers.

- 1 Why is today an interesting day for Helen? b
 - 2 Who isn't smiling?
 - 3 What is Helen doing in the taxi?
 - 4 Why is Helen's dad sad?
 - 5 What does Helen's dad give her?
- a She's crying.
~~b~~ It's her twelfth birthday.
 c A baby blanket.
 d Helen's mum and dad.
 e He doesn't know about her birth parents.

LOOKING FORWARD

.....

6 Tick (✓) what you think happens in Chapter 2.

- 1 Helen finds her birth parents.
- 2 Helen doesn't find her birth parents.