

A Short Story: The Lies the Camera Tells [B2]

Si tratta di un triangolo amoroso o solo di falsi sospetti? Un matrimonio, una morte e delle menzogne irrisolte.



It was a sad day for Roy, the saddest day of the year: today was the one-year anniversary of the death of his wife Maggie. He and Maggie had been married for forty-two years and had two children together. No marriage was perfect, but Roy had been a good husband and Maggie, for the most part, had been a good wife. It had been a difficult year for Roy. He still lived in the family home, and sometimes he found the silence oppressive. At these times, he often [reflected](#) on his [memories](#) of Maggie because now that she was dead, [memories](#) were all he had. "But the problem with memory," he now told his brother, Sam, "is that it's fallible." That's why today, on this sad but special anniversary, he had [retrieved](#) Maggie's photo albums from the attic to look through them. "But the camera doesn't lie," he said. He showed Sam the photos of him and Maggie and their two children, all smiling into the camera. "Look! What a happy family we were!" Sam smiled [weakly](#). Sam was in a lot of the photos, too. He lived nearby and had been a constant presence in the family's lives. When Maggie had died, he had seemed as devastated as Roy. After Sam left, Roy continued looking at the photos of

him and his family. And after a while, he [noticed](#) something peculiar. In many of the photos, he wasn't the person standing next to Maggie, Sam was. Now that he had seen it, he couldn't stop seeing it. In one photo after the next, Maggie and Sam were together, sometimes [exchanging](#) a furtive smile, as if they shared a secret. Roy felt a [surge](#) of [rage](#). Had Maggie been having an affair with Sam? He'd always found it strange that Sam had never married, but now he thought he knew why: he'd been in love with Maggie! But surely Maggie wouldn't have been [unfaithful](#) to Roy. Roy had been a great husband, a perfect husband. He had worked hard and given her and the children everything — as proven by the photos of them all enjoying [lavish](#) holiday celebrations and expensive vacations. But now he realised that she had often disappeared for hours [at a time](#), and now he knew where she'd been going, who she'd been with... For a moment, he considered going to Sam's house and confronting him over what he had discovered. But then he [decided against](#) it. Sam was the only close family member he had, and they were old now, too old to fight. They had limited time together and Roy wanted that time to be harmonious, not full of conflict. The important thing was that he knew the truth, that he was a good man, a great man, and that his wife and brother were weak and fallible. He could live with that. At the same time that Roy was arriving at this conclusion, Sam was sitting in his garden reflecting on his own [memories](#). He thought about Maggie, about all the times she had come to him, about all the times she had cried in his arms. "If it wasn't for you," she told him the last time they'd been alone together, "I would have left Roy a long time ago." Sam loved his brother but Roy was a difficult man, and he'd been a terrible husband and father. Certainly he'd worked hard to provide for them, and he'd given the impression to others of being kind and generous. But in reality, he had been controlling, [domineering](#) and cold. Whenever he'd [upset](#) Maggie or one of the children, Maggie had come to Sam. "You're the only one who really knows him," she'd often told him. "You're the only one who understands." She had told him all her marital secrets, and he had told her his own secrets about his life as a lonely gay man. This was something he'd never told Roy, who was not only a [bully](#), but was also a [bigot](#) and a homophobe. He thought now of the photo albums. Maggie had shown them to him once, told him that she [compiled](#) them for her children. "I hope in time that the children will look at these

photos and forget some of the bad **memories** of their father,” she had said, “appreciate the things he gave us, maybe even forgive him.” Today, Roy had told Sam, “The camera doesn’t lie.” But the truth is that the camera does nothing but lie. Someone **holds up** a camera and everyone adopts a false smile. The smiles in Maggie’s photo albums were as false as the impression Roy gave to others, the impression he had of himself. For a moment, Sam considered going to Roy’s house and confronting him with the truth. But then he **decided against** it. Sam was the only close family member he had, and they were old now, too old to fight. They had limited time together and Sam wanted that time to be harmonious, not full of conflict. The important thing was that he knew the truth, and he could live with that.

Glossary

- **memories** = ricordi
- **retrieved** = recuperare
- **exchanging** = scambiare
- **surge** = ondata
- **rage** = rabbia
- **reflected** = riflettere
- **weakly** = debolmente
- **domineering** = autoritario
- **upset** = turbare
- **holds up** = tenere in mano
- **noticed** = notare
- **bigot** = bigotto, intollerante
- **compiled** = raccogliere
- **unfaithful** = infedele
- **lavish** = sontuose
- **at a time** = di fila
- **decided against** = decidere di no
- **bully** = prepotente