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If, after reading the following chapters, you want to find out what happens, you can purchase the book, published by Alfred A. Knopf, Inc. and Penguin Books, at your local bookstore.

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Chapter 1: Mr. Wonka Goes Too Far

The last time we saw Charlie, he was riding high above his home town in the Great Glass Elevator. Only a short while before, Mr. Wonka had told him that the whole gigantic fabulous Chocolate Factory was his, and now our small friend was returning in triumph with his entire family to take over. The passengers in the Elevator (just to remind you) were:

Charlie Bucket, our hero.

Mr. Willy Wonka, chocolate-maker extraordinary.

Mr. and Mrs. Bucket, Charlie's father and mother.

Grandpa Joe and Grandma Josephine, Mr. Bucket's father and mother.

Grandpa George and Grandma Georgina, Mrs. Bucket's father and mother.

Grandma Josephine, Grandma Georgina and Grandpa George were still in bed, the bed having been pushed on board just before take off. Grandpa Joe, as you remember, had gotten out of bed to go around the Chocolate Factory with Charlie.

The Great Glass Elevator was a thousand feet up and cruising nicely. The sky was a brilliant blue. Everybody on board was wildly excited at the thought of going to live in the famous Chocolate Factory.

Grandpa Joe was singing. Charlie was jumping up and down. Mr. and Mrs. Bucket were smiling for the first time in years, and the three old ones in the bed were grinning at one another with pink toothless gums.

"What in the world keeps this thing up in the air?" croaked Grandma Josephine.

"Sky hooks," said Mr. Wonka.

"You amaze me," said Grandma Josephine.

"Dear lady," said Mr. Wonka, "you are new to the scene. When you have been with us a little longer, nothing will amaze you."

"These sky hooks," said Grandma Josephine. "I assume one end is hooked onto this contraption we're riding in. Right?"

"Right," said Mr. Wonka.

"What's the other end hooked onto?" said Grandma Josephine.

"Every day," said Mr. Wonka, "I get deafer and deafer. Remind me, please, to call up my ear doctor the moment we get back."

"Charlie," said Grandma Josephine. "I don't think I trust this gentleman very much."

"Nor do I," said Grandma Georgina. "He fools around."

Charlie leaned over the bed and whispered to the two old women. "Please," he said, "don't spoil everything. Mr. Wonka is a fantastic man. He's my friend. I love him."

"Charlie's right," whispered Grandpa Joe, joining the group. "Now you be quiet, Josie, and don't make trouble."

"We must hurry!" said Mr. Wonka. "We have so much time and so little to do! No! Wait! Strike that! Reverse it! Thank you! Now back to the factory!" he cried, clapping his hands once and springing two feet in the air with two feet. "Back we fly to the factory! But we must go up before we can come down! We must go HIGHER AND HIGHER!"

"What did I tell you!" said Grandma Josephine. "The man's cracked!"

"Be quiet, Josie," said Grandpa Joe. "Mr. Wonka knows exactly what he's doing."

"He's cracked as a crab!" said Grandma Georgina.

"We must go higher!" said Mr. Wonka. "We must go tremendously high! Hold onto your stomachs!" He pressed a brown button. The Elevator shuddered, and then with a fearful whooshing noise it shot vertically upward like a rocket.

Everybody clutched hold of everybody else and as the great machine gathered speed, the rushing whooshing sound of the wind outside grew louder and louder and shriller and shriller until it became a piercing shriek and you had to yell to make yourself heard.

"But why?" they all shouted at once. "Why up and not down?"

"Because the higher we are when we start coming down, the faster we'll be going when we hit," said Mr. Wonka. "We've got to be going at an absolutely sizzling speed when we hit!"

"When we hit WHAT?" they cried.

"The factory, of course," answered Mr. Wonka.

"You must be whackers!" said Grandma Josephine. "We'll all be liquefied!"

"We'll be scrambled like eggs!" said Grandma Georgina.

"That," said Mr. Wonka, "is a chance we shall have to take."

"You're joking," said Grandma Josephine. "Tell us you're joking."

"Madam," said Mr. Wonka, "I never joke."

"Oh, my dears!" cried Grandma Georgina. "We'll be LIXIVIATED, every one of us!"

"More than likely," said Mr. Wonka.

Grandma Josephine screamed and disappeared under the bedclothes. Grandma Georgina clutched Grandpa George so tight he changed shape. Mr. and Mrs. Bucket stood hugging each other, speechless with fright.

Only Charlie and Grandpa Joe kept moderately cool. They had traveled a long way with Mr. Wonka and had grown accustomed to surprises. But as the Great Elevator continued to streak upward, farther and farther

away from the earth, even Charlie began to feel a trifle nervous.

"Mr. Wonka!" he yelled above the noise. "What I don't understand is why we've got to come down at such a terrific speed."

"My dear boy," Mr. Wonka answered, if we don't come down at a terrific speed, we'll never burst our way back in through the roof of the factory. It's not easy to punch a hole in a roof as strong as that."

But there's a hole in it already," said Charlie. "We made it when we came out."

"Then we shall make another," said Mr. Wonka. "Two holes are better than one. Any mouse will tell you that."

Higher and higher rushed the Great Glass Elevator until soon they could see the countries and oceans of the earth spread out below them like a map. It was all very beautiful, but when you are standing on a glass floor looking down, it gives you a nasty feeling.

Even Charlie was beginning to feel frightened now. He hung on tightly to Grandpa Joe's hand and looked up anxiously into the old man's face. "I'm scared, Grandpa," he said.

Grandpa Joe put an arm around Charlie's shoulders and held him close. "So am I, Charlie," he said.

"Mr. Wonka!" Charlie shouted. "Don't you think this is about high enough?"

"Very nearly," Mr. Wonka answered. "But not quite. Don't talk to me now, please. Don't disturb me. I must watch things very carefully at this stage. Split-second timing, my boy, that's what it's got to be. You see this green button. I must press it at exactly the right instant. If I'm just half a second late, then we'll go TOO HIGH!"

"What happens if we go too high?" asked Grandpa Joe.

"Do please stop talking and let me concentrate!" Mr. Wonka said.

At that precise moment, Grandma Josephine poked her head out from under the sheets and peered over the edge of the bed. Through the glass floor she saw the entire continent of North America nearly two hundred miles below and looking no bigger than a piece of candy.

"Someone's got to stop this maniac," she screeched, and she shot out a wrinkled old hand and grabbed Mr. Wonka by the coattails and yanked him backward onto the bed.

"No, no," cried Mr. Wonka, struggling to free himself. "Let me go! I have things to see to! Don't disturb the pilot!"

"You madman," shrieked Grandma Josephine, shaking Mr. Wonka so fast that his head became a blur. "You get us back home this instant!"

"Let me go!" cried Mr. Wonka. "I've got to press that button or we'll go too high! Let me go! Let me go!" But Grandma Josephine hung on. "Charlie!" shouted Mr. Wonka. "Press the button! The green one! Quick, quick, quick!"

Charlie leaped across the Elevator and banged his thumb down on the green button. But as he did so, the Elevator gave a mighty groan and rolled over onto its side, and the rushing whooshing noise stopped altogether and an eerie silence took its place.

"Too late!" cried Mr. Wonka. "Oh, my goodness me, we're cooked!" As he spoke, the bed with the three old ones in it and Mr. Wonka on top lifted gently off the floor and hung suspended in mid-air.

Charlie and Grandpa Joe and Mr. and Mrs. Bucket also floated upward so that in a twinkling the entire company, as well as the bed, were floating around like balloons inside the Great Glass Elevator.

"Now look what you've done!" said Mr. Wonka, floating about.

"What happened?" Grandma Josephine called out. She had floated clear of the bed and was hovering near the ceiling in her nightshirt.

"Did we go too far?" Charlie asked.

"Too FAR?" cried Mr. Wonka. "I'll say we went too far! You know where we've gone, my friends? We've gone into orbit!"

They gaped, they gasped, they stared. They were too flabbergasted to speak.

"We are now rushing around the earth at seventeen thousand miles an hour," Mr. Wonka said. "How does that grab you?"

"I'm choking!" gasped Grandma Georgina. "I can't breathe!"

"Of course you can't," said Mr. Wonka. "There's no air up here." He sort of swam across under the ceiling to a button marked OXYGEN. He pressed it. "You'll be all right now," he said. "Breathe away."

"This is the queerest feeling," Charlie said, swimming about. "I feel like a bubble."

"It's great," said Grandpa Joe. "It feels as though I don't weigh anything at all."

"You don't," said Mr. Wonka. "None of us weighs anything -- not even one ounce."

"What piffle!" said Grandma Georgina. "I weigh eighty-seven pounds exactly."

"Not now you don't," said Mr. Wonka. "You are completely weightless."

The three old ones, Grandpa George, Grandma Georgina and Grandma Josephine were trying frantically to get back into the bed, but without success.

The bed was floating about in mid-air. They, of course, were also floating, and every time they got above the bed and tried to lie down, they simply floated up out of it. Charlie and Grandpa Joe were hooting with laughter. "What's so funny?" said Grandma Josephine.

"We've got you out of bed at last," said Grandpa Joe.

"Shut up and help us back!" snapped Grandma Josephine.

"Forget it," said Mr. Wonka. "You'll never stay down. Just keep floating around and be happy."

"The man's a madman!" cried Grandma Georgina. "Watch out, I say, or he'll lixiviate the lot of us!"

Chapter 2: Space Hotel "USA"

Mr. Wonka's Great Glass Elevator was not the only thing orbiting the

earth at that particular time. Two days earlier, the United States of America had successfully launched its first Space Hotel, a gigantic sausage-shaped capsule no less than one thousand feet long.

It was called Space Hotel "USA" and it was the marvel of the space age. It had inside it a tennis court, a swimming pool, a gymnasium, a children's playroom and five hundred luxury bedrooms, each with a private bath. It was fully air-conditioned. It was also equipped with a gravity-making machine so that you didn't float about inside it. You could walk normally.

This extraordinary object was now speeding round and round the earth at a height of two hundred and forty miles. Guests were to be taken up and down by a taxi service of commuter capsules blasting off from Cape Kennedy every hour on the hour, Monday through Friday.

But as yet there was nobody on board at all, not even an astronaut. The reason for this was that no one had really believed such an enormous thing would ever get off the ground without blowing up.

But the launching had been a great success and now that the Space Hotel was safely in orbit, there was a tremendous hustle and bustle to send up the first guests. It was rumored that the President of the United States himself was going to be among the first to stay in the hotel, and of course there was a mad rush by all sorts of other people across the world to book rooms.

Several kings and queens had cabled the White House in Washington for reservations, and a Texas millionaire called Orson Cart, who was about to marry a Hollywood starlet called Helen High Water, was offering one hundred thousand dollars a day for the honeymoon suite.

But you cannot send guests to a hotel unless there are lots of people there to look after them, and that explains why there was yet another interesting object orbiting the earth at that moment. This was the large Commuter Capsule containing the entire staff for Space Hotel "USA"

There were managers, assistant managers, desk clerks, waitresses, bellhops, chambermaids, pastry chefs and hall porters. The capsule they were traveling in was manned by the three famous astronauts, Shuck-Worth, Shanks and Shoaler, all of them handsome, clever and brave.

"In exactly one hour," said Shuck-Worth, speaking to the passengers over the loudspeaker, "we shall link up with Space Hotel 'USA,' your happy home for the next ten years. And any moment now, if you look straight ahead, you should catch your first glimpse of this magnificent spaceship.

Ah-ha! I see something there! That must be it, folks! There's definitely something up there ahead of us!"

Shuck-Worth, Shanks and Shoaler, as well as the managers, assistant managers, desk clerks, waitresses, bellhops, chambermaids, pastry chefs, hall porters, all stared excitedly through the windows. Shuck-Worth fired a couple of small rockets to make the capsule go faster, and they began to catch up very quickly.

"Hey," yelled Shoaler. "That isn't our Space Hotel."

"Holy rats!" cried Shanks. "What in the name of Nebuchadnezzar is it?"

"Quick! Give me the telescope!" yelled Shuck-Worth. With one hand, he focused the telescope and with the other he flipped the switch

connecting him to Ground Control.

"Hello, Houston!" he cried into the mike. "There's something crazy going on up here. There's a thing orbiting ahead of us and it's not like any spaceship I've ever seen, that's for sure!"

"Describe it at once," ordered Ground Control in Houston.

"It's... it's all made of glass and it's kind of square and it's got lots of people inside it! They're all floating about like fish in a tank!"

"How many astronauts on board?"

"None," said Shuck-Worth. "They can't possibly be astronauts."

"What makes you say that?"

"Because at least three of them are in nightshirts!"

"Don't be a fool, Shuck-Worth!" snapped Ground Control. "Pull yourself together, man! This is serious!"

"I swear it!" cried poor Shuck-Worth. "There's three of them in nightshirts! Two old women and one old man! I can see them clearly! I can even see their faces! Jeepers, they're older than Moses! They're about ninety years old!"

"You've gone mad, Shuck-Worth," shouted Ground Control. "You're fired. Give me Shanks!"

"Shanks speaking," said Shanks. "Now listen here, Houston. There's these three old birds in nightshirts floating around in this crazy glass box and there's a funny little guy with a pointed beard wearing a black top hat and a plum-colored velvet tailcoat and bottle-green trousers .

"Stop!" screamed Ground Control.

"Hold the phone!" said Shanks. "There's also a little boy about ten years old."

"That's no boy, you idiot!" shouted Ground Control. "That's an astronaut in disguise! It's a midget astronaut dressed up as a little boy! Those old people are astronauts too! They're all in disguise!"

"But who ARE they?" cried Shanks.

"How the heck would I know?" said Ground Control. "Are they heading for our Space Hotel?"

"That's exactly where they are heading," cried Shanks. "I can see the Space Hotel now about a mile ahead."

"They're going to blow it up!" yelled Ground Control. "This is desperate! This is..." Suddenly his voice was cut off and Shanks heard another quite different voice in his earphones. It was deep and rasping.

"I'll take charge of this," said the deep rasping voice. "Are you there, Shanks?"

"Of course I'm here," said Shanks. "But how dare you butt in! Keep your big nose out of this! Who are you anyway?"

"This is the President of the United States," said the voice.

"And this is the Wizard of Oz," said Shanks. "Who are you kidding?"

"Cut the piffle, Shanks!" snapped the President. "This is a national emergency!"

"Good grief!" said Shanks, turning to Shuck-Worth and Shoaler. "It really IS the President. It's the President himself! Well, HELLO THERE, Mr. President, sir. How are you today?"

"How many people are there in that glass capsule?" rasped the President.

"Eight," said Shanks. "All floating."
"FLOATING?!"

"We're outside the pull of gravity up here, Mr. President. Everything floats. We'd be floating ourselves if we weren't strapped down. Didn't you know that?"

"Of course I knew it," said the President. "What else can you tell me about that glass capsule?"

"There's a bed in it," said Shanks. "A big double bed, and that's floating too."

"A bed?" barked the President. "Whoever heard of a bed in a spacecraft!"

"I swear it's a bed!" said Shanks.

"You must be loopy, Shanks!" declared the President. "You're dotty as a doughnut! Let me talk to Shoaler!"

"Shoaler here, Mr. President," said Shoaler, taking the mike from Shanks. "It is a great honor to talk to you, Mr. President, sir."

"Oh, shut up!" said the President. "Just tell me what you see."

"It's a bed all right, Mr. President. I can see it through my telescope. It's got sheets and blankets and a mattress..."

"That's not a bed, you drivelling thick whit!" yelled the President. "Can't you understand it's a trick! It's a bomb! It's a bomb disguised as a bed! They're going to blow up our magnificent Space Hotel!"

"Who's THEY, Mr. President, sir?" said Shoaler.

"Don't talk so much and let me think!" said the President. There were a few moments of silence. Shoaler waited tensely. So did Shanks and Shuck-Worth. So did the managers and assistant managers and desk clerks and waitresses and bellhops and chambermaids and pastry chefs and hall porters.

And down in the huge Control Room at Houston, one hundred controllers sat motionless in front of their dials and monitors, waiting to see what orders the President would give next to the astronauts.

"I've just thought of something," said the President. "Don't you have a television camera up there on the front of your spacecraft, Shoaler?"

"Sure do, Mr. President."

"Then switch it on, you nit, and let all of us down here get a look at this object!"

"I never thought of that," said Shoaler. "No WONDER you're the President. "Here goes!" He reached out and switched on the T.V. camera in the nose of the spacecraft, and at that moment, five hundred million people all over the world who had been listening in on their radios, rushed to their television sets.

On their screens they saw exactly what Shuck-Worth and Shanks and Shoaler were seeing—a weird glass box in splendid orbit around the earth, and inside the box, seen not too clearly but seen nonetheless, were seven grown-ups and one small boy and a big double bed, all floating. Three of the grown-ups were barelegged and wearing nightshirts.

And far off in the distance, beyond the glass box, the T.V. watchers could see the enormous, glistening, silvery shape of Space Hotel "USA"

But it was the sinister glass box itself that everyone was staring at, and the cargo of sinister creatures inside it—eight astronauts so tough and strong they didn't even bother to wear spacesuits. Who were these people and where did they come from? And what in heaven's name was that big evil looking thing disguised as a double bed? The President had said it was a bomb and he was probably right. But what were they going to do with it?

All across America and Canada and Russia and Japan and India and China and Africa and England and France and Germany and everywhere else in the world a kind of panic began to take hold of the television watchers.

"Keep well clear of them, Shoaler!" ordered the President over the radio link.

"Sure will, Mr. President!" Shoaler answered. "I SURE WILL!"

Chapter 3: The Link-Up

Inside the Great Glass Elevator there was also a good deal of excitement. Charlie and Mr. Wonka and all the others could see clearly the huge silvery shape of Space Hotel "USA" about a mile ahead of them. And behind them was the smaller (but still pretty enormous) Commuter Capsule.

The Great Glass Elevator (not looking at all great now beside these two monsters) was in the middle. And of course everybody, even Grandma Josephine, knew very well what was going on. They even knew that the three astronauts in charge of the Commuter Capsule were called Shuck-Worth, Shanks and Shoaler.

The whole world knew about these things. Newspapers and television had been shouting about almost nothing else for the past six months. Operation Space Hotel was the event of the century.

"What a load of luck!" cried Mr. Wonka. "We've landed ourselves slap in the middle of the biggest space operation of all time!"

"We've landed ourselves in the middle of a nasty mess!" said Grandma Josephine. "Turn back at once!"

"NO, Grandma," said Charlie. "We've GOT to watch it now! We MUST see the Commuter Capsule linking up with the Space Hotel!"

Mr. Wonka floated right up close to Charlie. "Let's beat them to it, Charlie," he whispered. "Let's get there first and go aboard the

Space Hotel ourselves!"

Charlie gaped. Then he gulped. Then he said softly, "It's impossible. You've got to have all sorts of special gadgets to link up with another spacecraft, Mr. Wonka."

"My Elevator could link up with a crocodile if it had to," said Mr. Wonka. "Just leave it to me, my boy!"

"Grandpa Joe!" cried Charlie. "Did you hear that? We're going to link up with the Space Hotel and go on board!"

"Yippee!" shouted Grandpa Joe. "What a brilliant thought, sir! What a staggering idea!" He grabbed Mr. Wonka's hand and started shaking it like a thermometer.

"Be quiet, you balmy old bat!" said Grandma Josephine. "We're in a hot enough stew already! I want to go home!"

"Me, too!" said Grandma Georgina.

"What if they come after us?" said Mr. Bucket, speaking for the first time.

"What if they capture us?" said Mrs. Bucket.

"What if they shoot us?" said Grandma Georgina.

"What if my beard were made of green spinach?" cried Mr. Wonka. "Bunkum and tummy rot! You'll never get anywhere if you go about saying what-if like that. Would Columbus have discovered America if he'd said 'What if I sink on the way over? What if I meet pirates? What if I never come back?' He wouldn't even have started! We want no what-ifs around here, right Charlie?"

Off we go, then! But wait... this is a very tricky maneuver and I'm going to need help. We have to press lots of buttons, all in different parts of the Elevator. I shall take those two over there, the white and the black." Mr. Wonka made a funny blowing noise with his mouth and glided effortlessly, like a huge bird, across the Elevator to the white and black buttons, and there he hovered.

"Grandpa Joe, sir, kindly station yourself beside that silver button there ... yes, that's the one. And you, Charlie, go up and stay floating beside that little golden button near the ceiling. I must tell you that each of these buttons fires booster rockets from different places outside the Elevator.

That's how we change direction. Grandpa Joe's rockets turn us to starboard, to the right. Charlie's turn us to port, to the left. Mine make us go higher or lower or faster or slower. All ready?"

"No! Wait!" cried Charlie, who was floating exactly midway between the floor and the ceiling. "How do I get up? I can't get up to the ceiling!" He was thrashing his arms and legs violently, like a drowning swimmer, but getting nowhere.

"My dear boy," said Mr. Wonka. "You can't swim in this stuff. It isn't water you know. It's air and very thin air at that. There's nothing to push against. So you have to use jet propulsion.

Watch me. First, you take a deep breath, then you make a small round hole with your mouth and you blow as hard as you can. If you blow downward, you jet propel yourself up. If you blow to the left, you shoot off to the right, and so on. You maneuver yourself like a spacecraft, but using your mouth as a booster rocket."

Suddenly everyone began practicing this business of flying about, and the whole Elevator was filled with the blowing and snorting of the passengers.

Grandma Georgina, in her red flannel nightgown with two skinny bare legs sticking out of the bottom was trumpeting and spitting like a rhinoceros and flying from one side of the Elevator to the other, shouting, "Out of my way! Out of my way!" and crashing into poor Mr. and Mrs. Bucket with terrible speed. Grandpa George and Grandma Josephine were doing the same.

And well may you wonder what the millions of people down on earth were thinking as they watched these crazy happenings on their television screens. You must realize they couldn't see things very clearly.

The Great Glass Elevator was only about the size of a grapefruit on their screens, and the people inside, slightly blurred through the glass, were no bigger than the pits of the grapefruit. Even so, the watchers below could see them buzzing about wildly like insects in a glass box.

"What in the world are they doing?" shouted the President of the United States, staring at the screen.

"Looks like some kind of a war dance, Mr. President," answered astronaut Shoaler over the radio.

"You mean they're Indians!" said the President.

"I didn't say that, sir."

"Oh, yes you did, Shoaler."

"Oh, no I didn't, Mr. President."

"Silence!" said the President. "You're muddling me up."

Back in the Elevator, Mr. Wonka was saying, "Please! Please! Do stop flying about! Keep still everybody, so we can get on with the docking!"

"You miserable old mackerel!" said Grandma Georgina, sailing past him. "Just when we start having a bit of fun, you want to stop it!"

"Look at me, everybody!" shouted Grandma Josephine. "I'm flying! I'm a golden eagle!"

"I can fly faster than any of you!" cried Grandpa George, whizzing round and round, his nightgown billowing out behind him like the tail of a parrot.

"Grandpa George!" cried Charlie. "Please calm down. If we don't hurry, those astronauts will get there before us. Don't you want to see inside the Space Hotel, any of you?"

"Out of my way!" shouted Grandma Georgina, blowing herself back and forth. "I'm a jumbo jet!"

"You're a balmy old bat!" said Mr. Wonka.

In the end, the old people grew tired and out of breath, and everyone settled quietly into a floating position. "All set, Charlie and Grandpa Joe, sir?" said Mr. Wonka.

"All set, Mr. Wonka," Charlie answered, hovering near the ceiling.

"I'll give the orders," said Mr. Wonka. "I'm the pilot. Don't fire your rockets until I tell you. And don't forget who is who. Charlie, you're port. Grandpa Joe, you're starboard."

Mr. Wonka pressed one of his own two buttons and immediately booster rockets began firing underneath the Great Glass Elevator. The Elevator leaped forward, but swerved violently to the right. "Hard a-port!" yelled Mr. Wonka. Charlie pressed his button. His rockets fired. The Elevator swung back into line. "Steady as you go!" cried Mr. Wonka. "Starboard ten degrees! ... Steady! ... Steady! ... Keep her there! ..."

Soon they were hovering directly underneath the tail of the enormous silvery Space Hotel. "You see that little square door with the bolts on it?" said Mr. Wonka. "That's the docking entrance. It won't be long now. Port a fraction ... Steady!..... Starboard a bit! ... Good ... Good ... Easy does it... We're nearly there . . . "

To Charlie, it felt rather as though he were in a tiny rowboat underneath the stern of the biggest ship in the world. The Space Hotel towered over them. It was enormous. "I can't wait," thought Charlie, "to get inside and see what it's like."