

Brief Synopsis
The Strawberry Harvest

The Strawberry Harvest is the true story of Paul Shelby who as a youngster during World War II survived the Nazi blitzkriegs that bombarded his small town in the British countryside. He also saw his way through serious health issues during his childhood and problems with bullies – both studies and teachers – at the various boarding schools he attended. But despite such a rocky beginning, Paul emerged as a happy and confident young man who was determined to be a teacher, a good teacher. Perhaps he was drawn to the profession because of his bad experiences with education – to somehow right a wrong. Paul also gained expert level in chess and became involved in sports, playing and coaching both football and badminton.

Paul enjoyed teaching although his career began in the Lower East side and he had to contend with students who had an even rougher beginning than he did. Eventually, he found his way to a good school and enjoyed teaching several subjects but especially enjoyed his religion classes. But it was in one of his religion classes that Paul met a destiny he never dreamed of and in the most unexpected way. When he called roll at the beginning of a new school year, he was astonished when a beautiful, alluring sixteen-year-old stood answering to his call for “Jane Gray.” Paul was immediately taken with the young student who was well aware of her appeal to men – including older men like Paul.

Although a relationship between Paul, who was in his fifties by then, and a sixteen-year-old student was beyond taboo, Paul could not get Jane out of his mind or system. Paul could not stay away from Jane and in many ways inserted himself into her life although she was, unbeknownst to him, at the controls all the while. Jane exploited Paul’s vulnerability and feelings for her for years. He was completely at her beck and call; he’d do anything to be with her, to have the chance for a future with her.

When Jane has a baby, Paul feels certain that the boy must be his. Paul refuses to take a DNA test that would prove paternity because it would crush him if he learned that he wasn’t the father. The boy, James, becomes the most important part of Paul’s life. When Jane decides that she wants to move on, she coldly tells Paul that he will not be able to see the boy, now six, any longer. Paul survived much adversity in his life. But losing his relationship with James is one that he could not bear. Paul is determined to fight and do whatever it takes to have James in his life again.