

Project Seahorse

by Hannah Harper

The future is... pregnant
with possibility.

Writing the Future, the world's largest health short story prize, is brought to you by Kaleidoscope Health & Care. Inspired by science fiction, our shortlisted entries consider how health and healthcare in the UK will look in the year 2100.

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KALEIDOSCOPE

Project Seahorse
by Hannah Harper

Eva Albemarle [Eva@AAKagency.com]

To: Harvey Rudd

Monday, December 14, 2099, 13:23

Subject: Project Seahorse Phase 2

Harvey,

Great to meet you earlier. As requested, please find below a bit more about me for Craig. We really think he's the perfect fit for this documentary, and we hope you think so too.

I look forward to hearing from you both.

All best

Eva

Project Seahorse – background

As you'll remember, in 2089 things were tough for our country. We were reeling from successive financial crashes. The population was old – really old. And our birth rate was dangerously low. Women just weren't having as many children – or any at all. The Government, banks, care homes, hospitals etc. were deeply concerned.

Then ICL announced a boar had undergone a successful womb implant, egg implant and had carried a healthy foetus to term (delivered by C-section). They asked for male human volunteers.

This idea of 'Male Motherhood' (MM) gained traction. But there was also hostility. Remember the riots of 2090? Opponents of MM organised nation-wide protests which, in some areas, turned into full-scale riots. Paternity clinics were set on fire, and doctors sympathetic to MM were targeted for harassment.

The response – Project Seahorse Phase 1

Our agency fought off eleven others to win the Government tender for Project Seahorse – and I led the pitch. The result of Project Seahorse was 2095's award-winning ad campaign, *Your Country Needs You Still**, which urged thousands** of cis men to take advantage of the huge advances in bioengineering over the last decade and start having babies themselves. As you know, I researched, co-wrote and art-directed this campaign. MM is a huge part of my professional life. I know it inside out.

2099 – where we are now

We're seeing a slight downturn in applications for MM and need to try something different to re-engage the public and freshen the message. Hence **Seahorse Phase 2** – a documentary following a high-profile celebrity's journey into MM, from womb implant to egg implant to caesarean delivery of the child.

* Pitch deck available on request

** Figures available on request

Albemarle | Anscombe | Kidd

Harvey Rudd [HarveyRudd@HT.com]
To: Eva Albemarle
Sunday, January 3, 2100, 06: 58
Subject: RE: Project Seahorse Phase 2

Eva,

Happy New Year. I have good news. It's a yes from us. Albeit a heavily-caveated one.

We need to sit down with your crew and go through your vision from start to finish.

I need sight of story boards and shooting scripts please. Ruthie is not happy (understatement) with Craig doing this for obvious reasons and I've already spoken to David – I think it was David – and we've agreed she won't be appearing in any of the show apart from the ending, which will hopefully be a happy one (fingers crossed). Maybe a montage when the baby is here (touch wood) – showing Craig throughout his pregnancy and then all three together. Maybe laughing in the living room or garden or something, I'll leave that to you. But never just Ruthie – she doesn't want that.

No sneaky questions either please, nothing 'off the record'. You-know-what will not be mentioned. I'm sure you appreciate our position.

Here's to the new face of Male Motherhood. Looking forward to the journey.

Harvey Rudd

Sent from my HealthWatch

Eva Albemarle [Eva@AAKagency.com]
To: Harvey Rudd
Sunday, January 3, 2100, 07: 12
Subject: RE: RE: Project Seahorse Phase 2

Harvey,

I can't say how delighted I am to hear Craig will be joining us aboard the Male Motherhood ship. He's an enormous influencer, despite recent events(!) and I'm confident he's the best fit for us – and that we are for you.

Re: Ruthie – understood. This is Craig's show.

We're aiming big. We want MM to be the norm by 2120. We'll be promoting this hard in all channels and we're putting big spend behind it too. I want every man in Britain to know Craig Brogan is getting pregnant, so why not him too. I want every teenage boy in every college in every county factoring MM into his career plans. I want it to be all over social. I want strangers talking on the tube!

A thought: when he's six months, let's reshoot the Slate Yorston campaign. How iconic would that be? The same man – the same underwear range – the same muscles – only now he's with child. Beautiful.

Project Seahorse
by Hannah Harper

I'll have Jack set up a kick-off meeting and we'll get this thing going. Thrilled to have you with us.

All best

Eva

Albemarle | Anscombe | Kidd

Project Seahorse
by Hannah Harper

Eva Albemarle [Eva@AAKagency.com]

To: Harvey Rudd

Sunday, January 3, 2100, 07: 17

Subject: RE: RE: RE: Project Seahorse Phase 2

Harvey,

Just one thing while I think of it.

I know we agreed all comms to go through you, but I'll still need to see Craig and talk to him directly about the MM journey and what we want to achieve fairly soon. We need to know we have his full cooperation and that he's doing it for the right reasons. The audience will pick up on anything less than 100% enthusiasm from him and then the whole thing's dead in the water before the end of Ep 1.

Of course, I'm not suggesting he is uncertain about anything, just covering my back. I'm sure you understand.

All best

Eva

Albemarle | Anscombe | Kidd

Project Seahorse
by Hannah Harper

Eva Albemarle [Eva@AAKagency.com]

To: Cooper, Christiane; Viljoen, Henry; Diaz, Loretta

Monday, January 4, 2100, 14:06

Subject: Project Seahorse: Phase 2 is go

All,

Thanks for your time this morning – delighted to have you involved and on standby.

Please find attached a one-pager for Seahorse 2 covering the following days, weeks, months and years.

Please also find attached an NDA. If you could each sign and return these to me at your earliest convenience that would be greatly appreciated. It goes without saying Seahorse 2 is extremely high profile, and your absolute discretion will be a critical part of its success.

All best

Eva

Albemarle | Anscombe | Kidd

Harvey Rudd [HarveyRudd@HT.com]
To: Eva Albemarle
Tuesday, January 19, 2100, 08:00
Subject: problem

Eva,

We may have run into a slight hiccup already.
Please see message below from Craig.
Can you suggest a solution here?

** ** Forwarded message ** **

From: Craig Brogan [WINNER2070@skipmail.com]
Monday, January 18, 2100, 23:59
Subject: Doctors

I met with their so-called 'celebrity doctor' and do you know what he reminds me of? His hands, specifically? A peregrine falcon.

I saw a documentary on peregrines only last week, which is probably why I made the link. Did you know they're sexually dimorphic? Which means the males and females have different characteristics beyond the obvious. E.g. female falcons are significantly bigger than male ones.

Project Seahorse
by Hannah Harper

This MM thing is a long, long process and I don't want a peregrine looking after me. I'm keeping my Personal. Please let them know.

The Seahorse

Sent from my HealthWatch

Project Seahorse
by Hannah Harper

Eva Albemarle [Eva@AAKagency.com]

To: Harvey Rudd

Tuesday, January 19, 2100, 08:28

Subject: RE: problem

Harvey,

No problem at all. Please let Craig know he can keep Dr. Noakes if it would make him feel more comfortable. We'll get a contract to her ASAP.

Eva

p.s. I like how he's calling himself The Seahorse now!

Albemarle | Anscombe | Kidd

Harvey Rudd [HarveyRudd@HT.com]

To: Eva Albemarle

Tuesday, January 19, 2100, 10:10

Subject: RE: RE: problem

Eva,

Thanks for your speedy response and for being so accommodating.

Unfortunately – and apologies, I’ve only just found out myself – his doctor doesn’t want to appear on camera. Problem being there are still – believe it or not – a few people out there who are vehemently opposed to this whole MM thing and she doesn’t want any adverse publicity. Or, of course, to put Craig in danger. Let’s not forget Newton Cherrett, after all. Not that I’m suggesting anything like that would happen now, God forbid. Times have changed, people are more accepting. But just to be sure.

Any way round this you can see?

Thanks

H

Sent from my HealthWatch

Eva Albemarle [Eva@AAKagency.com]

To: Harvey Rudd

Tuesday, January 19, 2100, 16:12

Subject: RE: RE: RE: problem

Harvey,

Thanks for bringing this to my attention. From a technical point of view, this isn't necessarily a problem. I've spoken with the producer and there are all sorts of things they can do with camera angles, focusing on hands, backs of heads, etc. Maybe even a screen if that would make her feel more comfortable. Just some mild concern from me about the effect this could have on the emotional resonance of the show. Imagine the moment when she says 'Craig, you're ready to have a baby'. Yes, we'll have his face, but it would be so much stronger to have hers too. If we're staring at her manicure as she delivers the news or worse, watching Craig reacting to a sheet or similar – I just don't know if that's going to deliver the impact we need to get men signing up.

I'd urge you to urge Craig to reconsider. Please let me know how you get on.

Albemarle | Anscombe | Kidd

Project Seahorse
by Hannah Harper

Loretta Diaz [L.Diaz@BaileyandGold.com]

To: Eva Albemarle

Wednesday, February 3, 2100, 12:37

Subject: Cherrett

Hi Eva,

Good to chat to you earlier. I've now spoken with the team and we agree a dedication to Newton Cherrett is a nice touch and something we can definitely accommodate. We just need the copy for the dedication plus your steer on where in the series it will go.

Look forward to your thoughts.

Cheers,

Lori

Bailey & Gold Productions

Sent from my HealthWatch

Project Seahorse
by Hannah Harper

Eva Albemarle [Eva@AAKagency.com]

To: Harvey Rudd

Thursday, February 4, 2100, 09:18

Subject: Noakes

Harvey,

Any luck with Craig's doctor's shyness problem?

As an aside, can I ask how you find your HealthWatch? Thinking of getting one.

E

Albemarle | Anscombe | Kidd

Harvey Rudd [HarveyRudd@HT.com]

To: Eva Albemarle

Thursday, February 4, 2100, 09:56

Subject: RE: Noakes

No luck unfortunately. He's not budging on this one.

Love my HealthWatch. We've all got one at home. Craig has too. Think of it as a 'wrist doctor'. With email. Anything you want it to track, it'll track. E.g. I'm watching my heart at the moment – long story – but it can differentiate between an exercise-related heart rate increase and a non-exercise related heart rate increase, and alerts me accordingly. Fully recommend.

Sent from my HealthWatch

Project Seahorse
by Hannah Harper

Eva Albemarle [Eva@AAKagency.com]

To: Harvey Rudd

Friday, February 5, 2100, 06:45

Subject: RE: RE: Noakes

Disappointing news, but I suspected as much. Of course the show must go on. I'll tell Lori.

Thanks for the links – so much choice! I've ordered this one.

Albemarle | Anscombe | Kidd

Eva Albemarle [Eva@AAKagency.com]
To: L.Diaz@BaileyandGold.com
Friday, February 5, 2100, 10:42
Subject: Re: Cherrett

Hi Lori,

Apols for slow response. I'd like the dedication to appear at the end of the series – episode 12, just before the closing credits. I'm thinking white font on a black background, right-aligned, with a photograph of Cherrett to the left.

Copy:

In memory of Newton Cherrett.

The first Male Mother.

A free spirit and a true pioneer.

Where he went, others now follow.

He will never be forgotten.

20 January 2059 – 14 June 2091

Just a thought – do we need to get in touch with the family to get this signed off? Permissions for the photo etc? Can I leave that with you?

Thanks.

Eva

Albemarle | Anscombe | Kidd

Project Seahorse
by Hannah Harper

Eva Albemarle [Eva@AAKagency.com]

To: Harvey Rudd

Wednesday, August 10, 2101, 11:00

Subject: 4 months!

Harvey,

With Craig nearly halfway through (how's he coping by the way?) I'm wondering whether we could revisit that blanket ban on Ruthie?

Just because I'm worrying it's a real misstep that we're trying to sell him as a family man and feminist but giving our audience a solo journey. I know he talks about Ruthie, and we had those few phone calls, but I think the public will need to physically see she's forgiven him and is actually supporting him carrying her child (and grateful?? Too much?) WDYT?

Thanks

E

Sent from my HealthWatch

Project Seahorse
by Hannah Harper

Harvey Rudd [HarveyRudd@HT.com]

To: Eva Albemarle

Wednesday, August 10, 2101, 11:11

Subject: RE: 4 months!

Eva,

Leave it with me. I can certainly raise it with Craig and Ruthie and we'll take it from there.

Glad to see you got a HealthWatch! How are you finding it?

Sent from my HealthWatch

Project Seahorse
by Hannah Harper

Harvey Rudd [HarveyRudd@HT.com]
To: Eva Albemarle; Seahorse@BaileyandGold.com
Tuesday, September 13, 2101, 06:17
Subject: URGENT AND CONFIDENTIAL

All,

Craig's gone AWOL. He went out last night and managed to give his bodyguards the slip. He has nothing with him – no medicines, no supplements, nothing. And he didn't take his phone.

We're doing our best to keep this out of the press – it goes without saying this is highly confidential.

I will keep you all posted. Pray for a safe return.

Harvey

Sent from my HealthWatch

Harvey Rudd [HarveyRudd@HT.com]

To: Eva Albemarle

Saturday, September 17, 2101, 12:04

Subject: Craig

Still no news. Ruthie's hysterical – and livid. She thinks the whole doc's been jinxed by the Newton Cherrett dedication. She thinks what happened to him is going to happen to Craig. The only thing that's comforting us at the moment (ha!) is that he took a lot of money out a week before he disappeared. Which points to this being a deliberate act. Right? But Jesus! He's nearly five months pregnant!

Sent from my HealthWatch

Project Seahorse
by Hannah Harper

Harvey Rudd [HarveyRudd@HT.com]
To: Eva Albemarle; Seahorse@BaileyandGold.com
Saturday, September 17, 2101, 16:57
Subject: DR NOAKES

All,

We've been told Dr. Selina Noakes, Craig's Personal, has also disappeared.

It seems unlikely this is a coincidence but we must keep our minds open at this stage.

Please can I remind you of your NDAs. It is a breach of contract to speak to anyone other than those this email is addressed to about this matter.

Harvey

Sent from my HealthWatch

Eva Albemarle [Eva@AAKagency.com]

To: Harvey Rudd

Saturday, September 17, 2101, 17:20

Subject: Perhaps...

Harvey

I'm sure you've considered these scenarios yourself but sometimes it helps to write it down:

1 – Craig wants to give birth in private and took Noakes with him. She's his Personal – assuming he's still wearing his HealthWatch she'd have tracked his movements and maybe followed him. If he's still missing on Monday, that's over a week and we can apply to access his HealthWatch data. That'll tell us more.

2 – They're having an affair.

3 – He doesn't want the baby after all. Noakes is there to perform a secret abortion.

4 – He's cracking up and feels like he needs some space.

5 – Something bad has happened.

But I'm sure it's not 5. Desperately hoping it's not 3. But also very aware there's extra pressure when you agree to carry your second child to make up for (allegedly) 'dislodging' your first.

Project Seahorse
by Hannah Harper

How's Ruthie doing?

I hope you're ok.

E

Sent from my HealthWatch

Harvey Rudd [HarveyRudd@HT.com]

To: Eva Albemarle

Sunday, September 18, 2101, 08:37

Subject: RE: Perhaps...

Eva

Is your email supposed to make me feel better?

I'd like to add a sixth possibility to your list.

You're to blame. You and everyone at AAK. Think about it. You sold him pregnancy. Maybe you didn't sell him parenthood?

Sent from my HealthWatch

Eva Albemarle [Eva@AAKagency.com]

To: Harvey Rudd

Sunday, September 18, 2101, 10:16

Subject: RE: RE: Perhaps

Harvey,

I don't like your insinuation.

Craig is a grown man, cleverer than your average footballer, with a reputation to salvage. You yourself confirmed he got the all-clear from the psychologists (and most people don't get free consultations with top psychologists before starting a family). I hardly think he's topped himself over the thought of impending parenthood. It wasn't a surprise, what he was getting into, was it?

Unless you forced him into it?

Unless you bullied him into thinking it was the only way things would ever get better for him after what he did to Ruthie? I never did get my meeting with him before shooting started, did I?

So let's add a seventh option to the list. You lied to us about his state of mind and his motivations for doing this whole MM thing. He never wanted any of it. In fact, he only did it to get you off his back.

Sent from my HealthWatch

Project Seahorse
by Hannah Harper

Harvey Rudd [HarveyRudd@HT.com]

To: Eva Albemarle

Sunday, September 18, 2101, 11:13

Subject: <no subject>

Eva,

I'm not dignifying your accusation with a response.

I'm sure it hasn't escaped your notice that interest in your forthcoming Male Motherhood documentary has sky-rocketed following Craig's disappearance.

Sent from my HealthWatch

Project Seahorse
by Hannah Harper

Eva Albemarle [Eva@AAKagency.com]

To: Harvey Rudd

Sunday, September 18, 2101, 23:40

Subject: RE: <no subject>

Interesting how it was 'our' Male Motherhood documentary until Craig went missing and now it's 'mine'.

Albemarle | Anscombe | Kidd

Harvey Rudd [HarveyRudd@HT.com]

To: Eva Albemarle

Monday, September 26, 2101, 07:45

Subject: The dust settles

Eva,

What a week. I apologise again for my comments. I was out of my mind with worry over Craig.

But we've got the two (three) of them back, even if it's not quite the family we started out with, and even if it's done sweet FA for Craig's reputation. Still, we'll get our montage of them laughing in the living room or wherever. Apparently Selina's all for being on camera now. Will certainly add a new flavour.

In other news, Ruthie's agreed to a documentary giving her side of the story. It was her egg, after all.

Harvey

Sent from my HealthWatch

Project Seahorse
by Hannah Harper

Eva Albemarle [Eva@AAKagency.com]

To: Harvey Rudd

Tuesday, September 27, 2101, 09:15

Subject: RE: The dust settles

Harvey,

That is good news. A follow-up with a legal flavour – we shadow Ruthie through the courts as she battles Craig for custody.

Your comments re: pregnancy v. parenthood have been noted. It's something we're planning to explore in Project Seahorse Phase 3.

Don't worry about negative publicity. If we can get past Newton Cherrett we can get past anything. Attached are latest conversion rates. It's an encouraging read.

Thanks

Eva

Albemarle | Anscombe | Kidd

About the author

Hannah Harper is a copywriter by day and a fiction writer by night. She grew up in Reading and lived in Sheffield and London before moving to the fine city of Norwich, where she gained an MA in Creative Writing from the University of East Anglia. She is currently completing her first novel. Her short story 'Camera Black' appeared in the Words and Women: Two anthology, published by Unthank Books.

Writing the Future is brought to you by Kaleidoscope Health & Care, in partnership with the Commonwealth Fund, Imperial Centre for Health Policy and the House of St Barnabas.

Kaleidoscope is a social enterprise focused on bringing people together to improve health and care. We seek to find new ways to start conversations which need to happen but often don't – in this case between writers and those working in health care.

If you are interested in how Kaleidoscope could help you spark debate and discussion on your topics, get in touch at **hello@kaleidoscope.healthcare**

The logo for Kaleidoscope, featuring the word "KALEIDOSCOPE" in a bold, sans-serif font. Each letter is filled with a vibrant, multi-colored pattern of small, overlapping shapes, creating a rainbow-like effect.