




# Girl on a Motorcycle

'Give me the money' says the robber to the Los Angeles security guard. The guard looks at the gun and hands over the money. The robber has long blond hair and rides a motorcycle – and a girl with long blond hair arrives at Kenny's motel – on a motorcycle. Is she the robber?

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Cover illustration by Kevin Hopgood

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OXFORD ENGLISH  
ISBN 0-19-423174-7



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# Girl on a Motorcycle



JOHN ESCOTT

OXFORD BOOKWORMS STARTERS



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UNIVERSITY PRESS

Great Clarendon Street, Oxford OX2 6DP

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New Delhi Shanghai Taipei Toronto

With offices in

Argentina Austria Brazil Chile Czech Republic France Greece  
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First published 2000

2005 2007 2008 2006

13 15 17 19 20 18 16 14 12

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ISBN-13: 978 0 19 423174 9

ISBN-10: 0 19 423174 7

Printed in China

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

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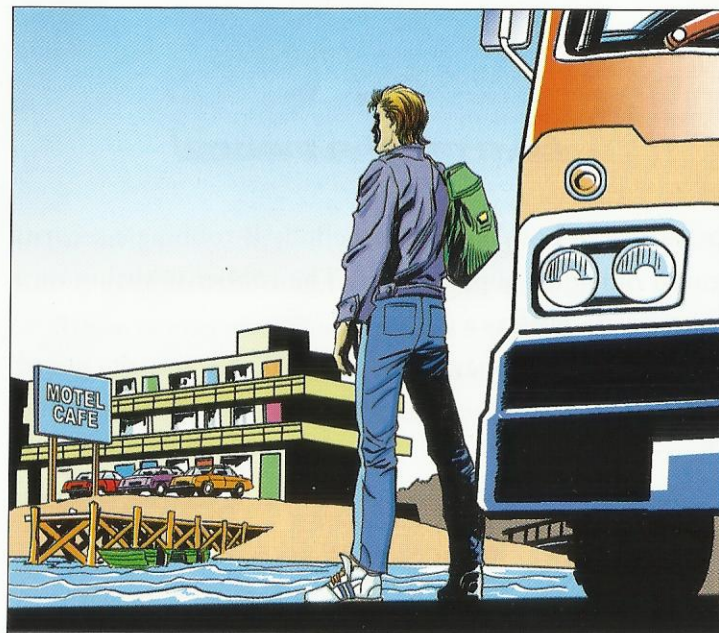
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1

## *Is there a motel?*

Kenny is going across America by bus. One evening in  
summer, his bus arrives in a little town in California.

'I want to stop here tonight,' says Kenny to the bus  
driver. 'Is there a motel, do you know?'

'Yes,' says the bus driver. 'There's a nice motel across the  
river. It's not expensive.'

'Is there a bus to San Francisco tomorrow?' asks Kenny.

'Yes,' says the bus driver, 'there's a bus every day.'

Kenny gets off the bus with his bag.

1



**2**

### ***Give me the money!***

In a street in Los Angeles, somebody is robbing a security guard outside a supermarket. The robber is sitting on a motorcycle and has a gun.

‘Give me the money!’ the robber tells the security guard.

‘OK, OK!’ says the security guard, and gives the robber the money.

Then the robber rides away – but a camera is taking pictures.

After the robbery, the supermarket manager phones the police.

‘Yes,’ he says. ‘A robbery . . . yes, long blond hair, and with a motorcycle . . . a man or woman? We don’t know . . . yes, we have some pictures . . . OK! Quickly.’



2

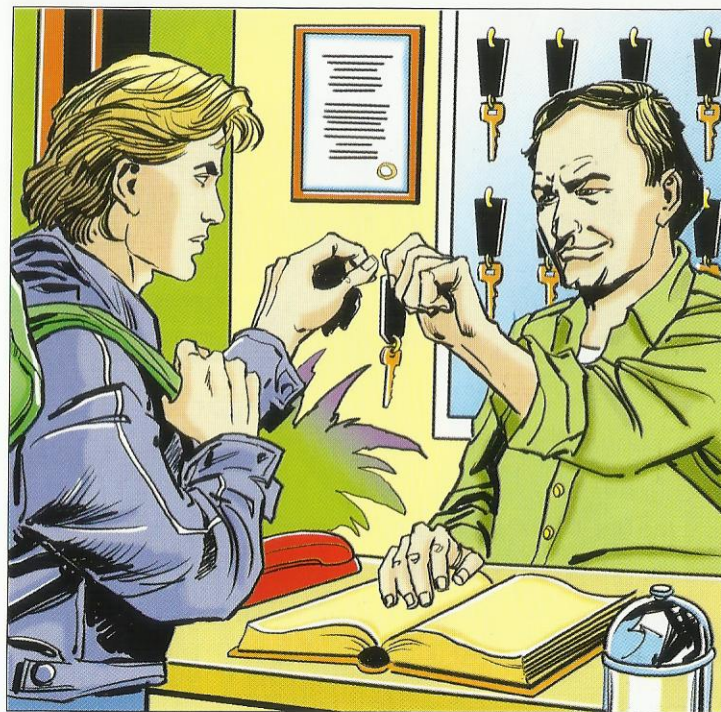
**3**

### ***Room twenty-three***

In the little town, fifty kilometres away from Los Angeles, Kenny goes into the motel and asks for a room.

‘Room twenty-three,’ says the man at the desk. He gives Kenny a key.

‘Thank you,’ says Kenny. And he goes up to his room.



3





An hour later, Kenny comes down to eat.

'I'm hungry,' he thinks.

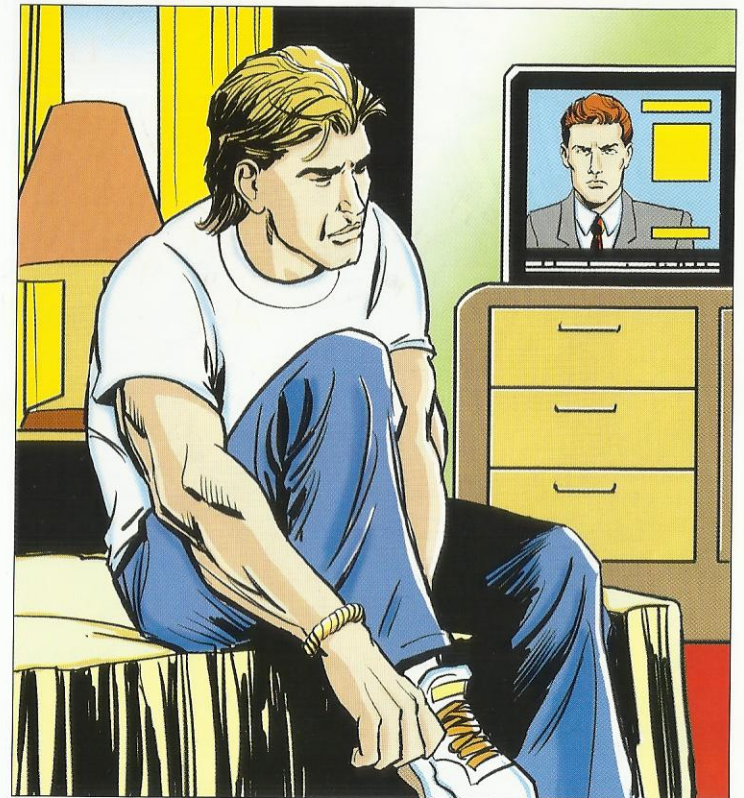
He sees a girl arrive on a motorcycle. She walks to the front desk, and the woman gives her a key.

'Room seventeen,' says the woman at the desk.

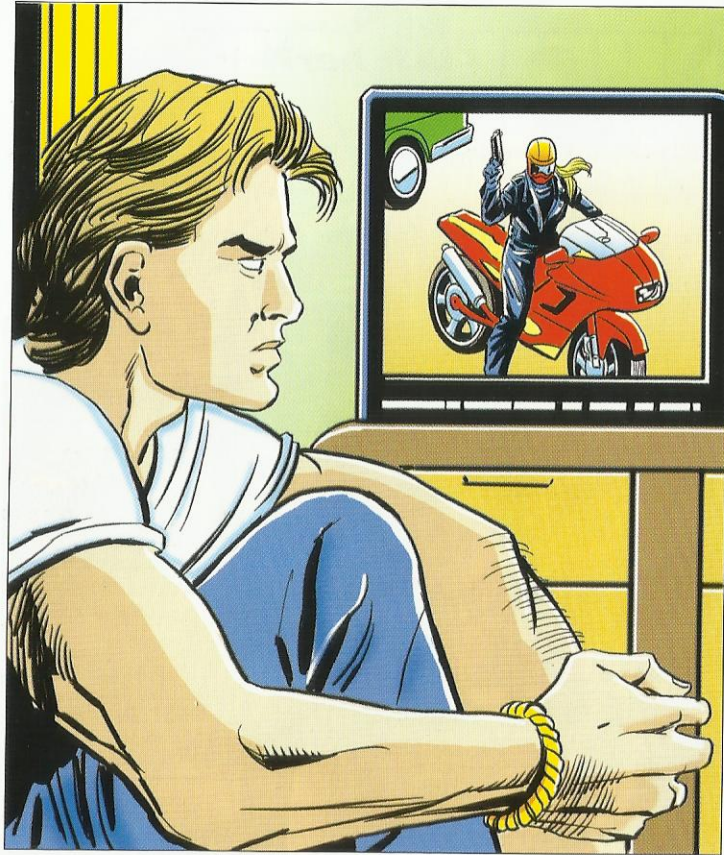
'I think I know her face,' thinks Kenny. 'Is she somebody famous?'

**4**  
***Is it her?***

Early the next morning, Kenny puts on the TV in his room. A news-reader is talking about the supermarket robbery. There are some pictures from the supermarket camera.







Kenny watches the news.

‘The robber is somebody with long blond hair, and with a motorcycle,’ says the news-reader.

Suddenly, Kenny remembers the girl at the motel desk. ‘Is it her?’ he thinks. ‘Is she the robber?’

***Can I sit here?***

He goes for breakfast. The girl is eating her breakfast at a table near the window. Kenny looks at her. ‘Is it her?’ he thinks. ‘I think I know her, but . . .’ He walks across to her table.

‘Can I sit here?’ he asks.

The girl looks up. ‘Well . . . OK,’ she says.





Kenny sits down. 'My name's Kenny,' he says.

'Pleased to meet you,' she says. 'I'm Mel.'

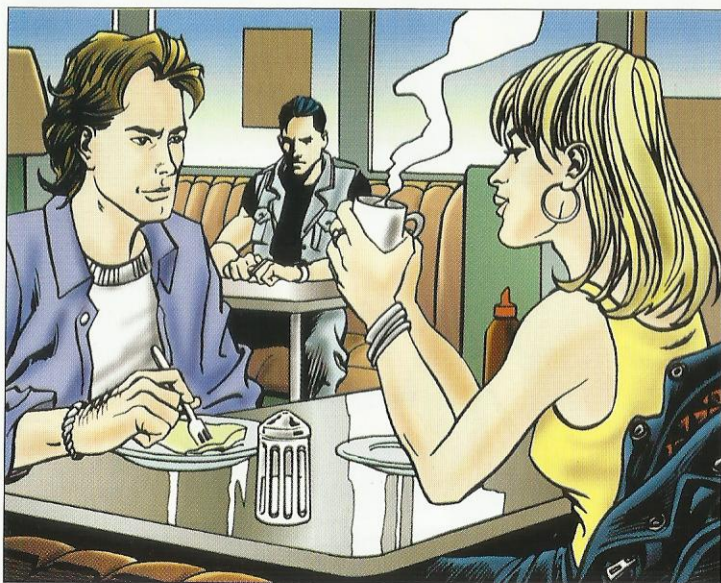
'Where are you from?' asks Kenny.

'San Francisco,' says Mel. 'I'm going there later this morning. Where are you from?'

'Boston,' says Kenny. 'I'm going across America by bus. And I'm going to San Francisco later this morning, too.'

'Are you?' the girl says. 'I don't like buses. I like motorcycles. Look, excuse me. I need to make a phone call.'

She gets up and leaves the room.



**Not the police**

A young man near the door is watching Mel.

'Why is he watching her?' thinks Kenny. 'Does he know her face, too? Is *he* thinking she's the girl from the robbery, too?'

Kenny goes to sit next to the young man.

'Hi,' he says. 'My name's Kenny Muir.'

'Hi,' says the young man. 'I'm . . . Ned.'







They begin talking. Kenny tells Ned about the news of the robbery on TV. He looks across at Mel. 'Are you thinking that's the same girl?' he asks Ned.

Ned looks across at her. 'I - I don't know,' he says. 'Perhaps it is.'

'What can we do?' says Kenny. 'She's leaving soon. Let's phone the police. I *think* it's her.'

'No!' Ned says quickly. 'Not the police. Wait...'

Kenny looks carefully at him. 'What's the matter? Are you... afraid of something?' he asks.

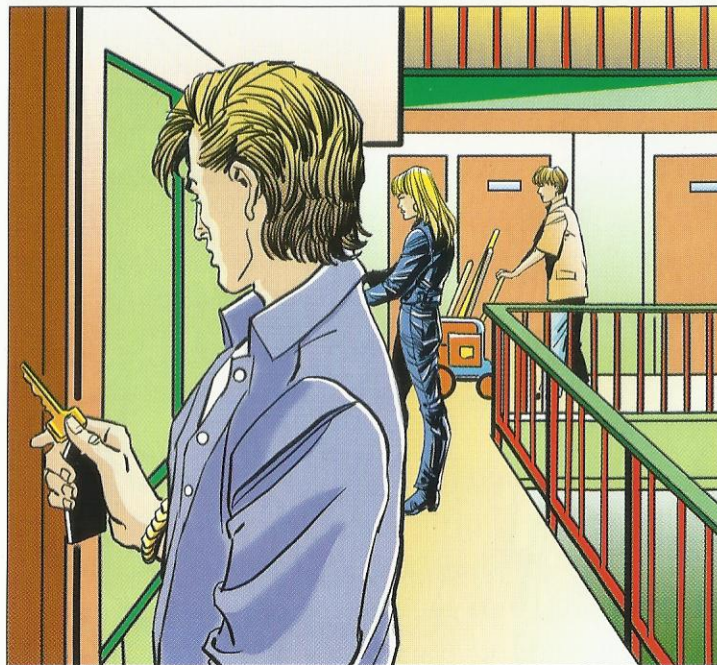
'No, but... perhaps she's got a gun!' says Ned.

**7**  
**Perhaps I'm wrong**

'Is it her?' thinks Kenny. 'I want to know. Perhaps the money from the robbery is in her room.'

Kenny goes upstairs. Suddenly he sees the girl again. She is coming out of room seventeen. Kenny watches her. She locks her door and goes downstairs.

'How can I get into her room?' he thinks.





Then Kenny sees a woman working in the motel.

'Excuse me,' says Kenny. 'Can you open the door of my room? My key's in the car. It's room seventeen.'

'Yes, of course,' she says, and opens the door of room seventeen.

'Thank you,' says Kenny, and he goes into the room.



Kenny searches the room, but he cannot find the money from the robbery.

'Perhaps I'm wrong about her,' he thinks.

Then he hears somebody opening the door with a key.

It's Mel!



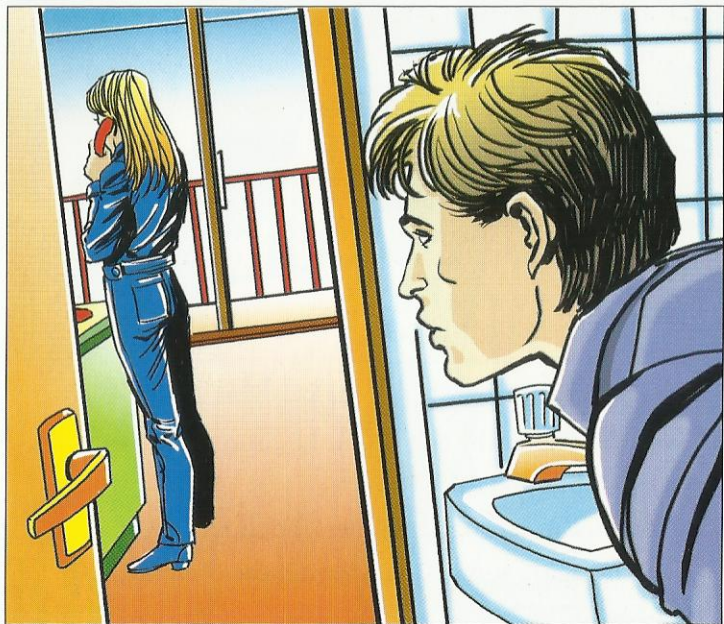
**8**

***I must get away***

Kenny runs into the bathroom. A minute later he hears Mel talking into the phone.

'Hi, Fran,' says Mel. 'No, I'm at the motel . . . No, I'm leaving in an hour . . . Yes, OK . . .'

Kenny looks out carefully from the bathroom. He cannot get to the door, but he can get to the window. He moves quickly.



Mel puts down the phone. Kenny watches her through the window.

'I must get away from here!' he thinks.

Kenny cannot go back into room seventeen, but he can open the window to room eighteen.





9

**You're the robber!**

Kenny climbs into room eighteen. There is nobody there. He goes across to the door. But then he sees something.

'What's that?' he thinks. 'Is it . . . a wig? It is. It's a blond wig!'



Kenny searches the room.

'Here's a black motorcycle coat,' he says to himself. 'And what's this in this bag? The money from the robbery!'



Kenny hears somebody coming. He wants to get out of the room, but he cannot.

Ned comes into the room. He sees Kenny.

'What are you doing in my room?' says Ned.

Then he sees the blond wig and the money. He looks at Kenny again.

'You know!' says Ned.

'Yes, I know!' says Kenny. 'You're the Los Angeles supermarket robber!'





Suddenly, Ned takes a gun from his coat.  
'Don't move!' he says. And he takes the bag from Kenny.  
'You can't get away,' says Kenny.  
'Yes, I can,' says Ned.  
He hits Kenny on the head, then he locks him in room  
eighteen.

**10**  
***I can't swim!***

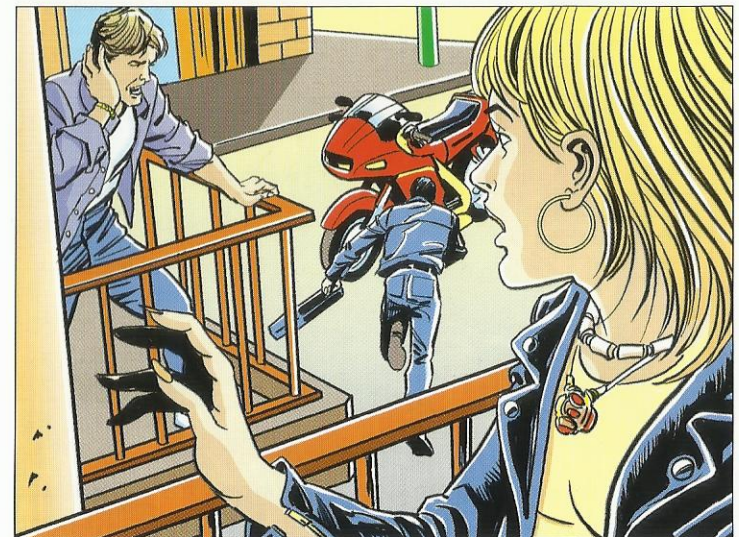
A minute later, Mel is looking across at the river from her room. Suddenly, she sees a man running.

'What's the matter with him?' she thinks. 'Why is he running?'

Then she sees Kenny come out of the next room.

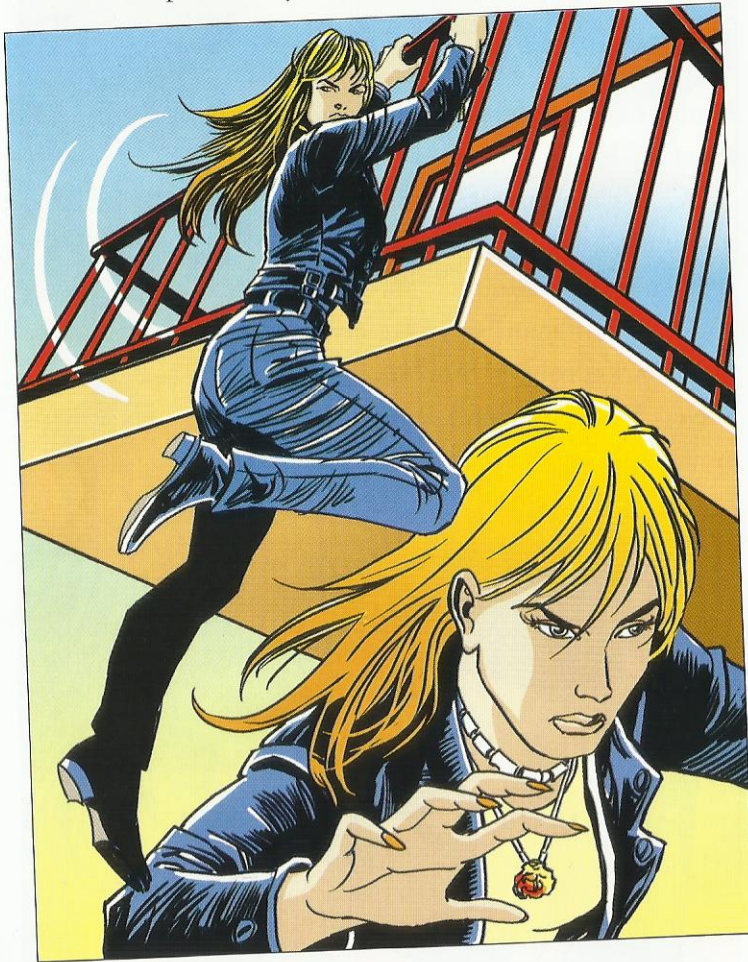
'Th - that man!' says Kenny. 'He's the Los Angeles supermarket robber! Stop him, somebody!'

Ned hears him and looks up. Then he gets on his motorcycle and drives off quickly.

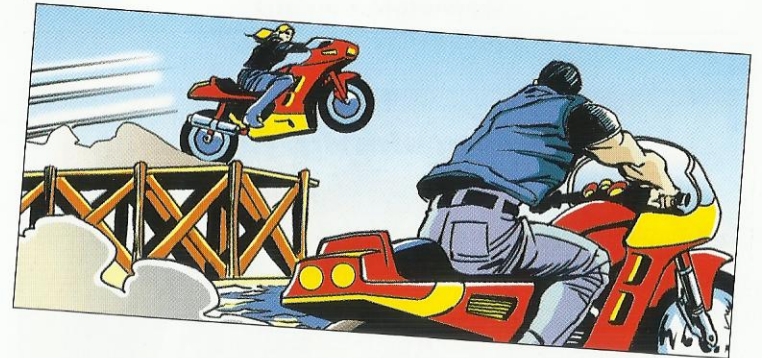




'I can stop him!' says Mel.

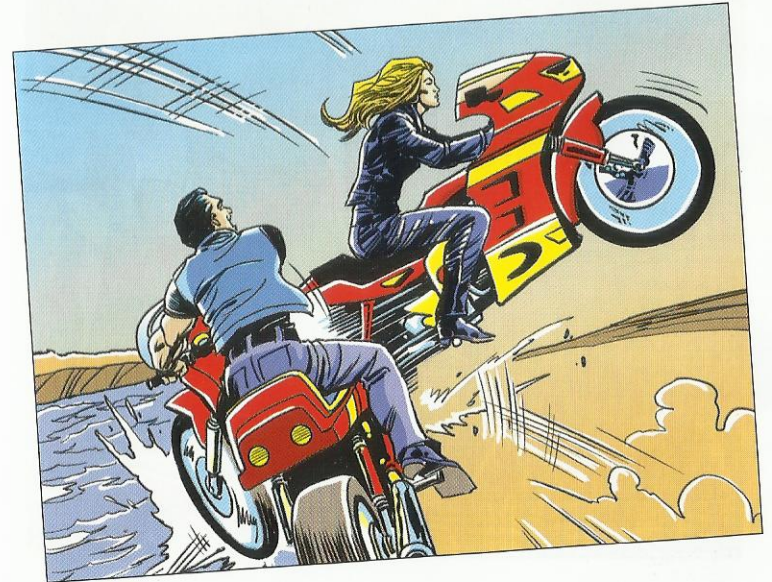


She climbs down from her room. She runs around the motel, gets on her motorcycle and goes after Ned.



Mel rides her motorcycle quickly towards the river. When she gets to the river, she jumps across the river on the motorcycle, and stops in front of Ned. He cannot stop, and his motorcycle goes into the river.

'Help! Help!' he cries. 'I can't swim!'





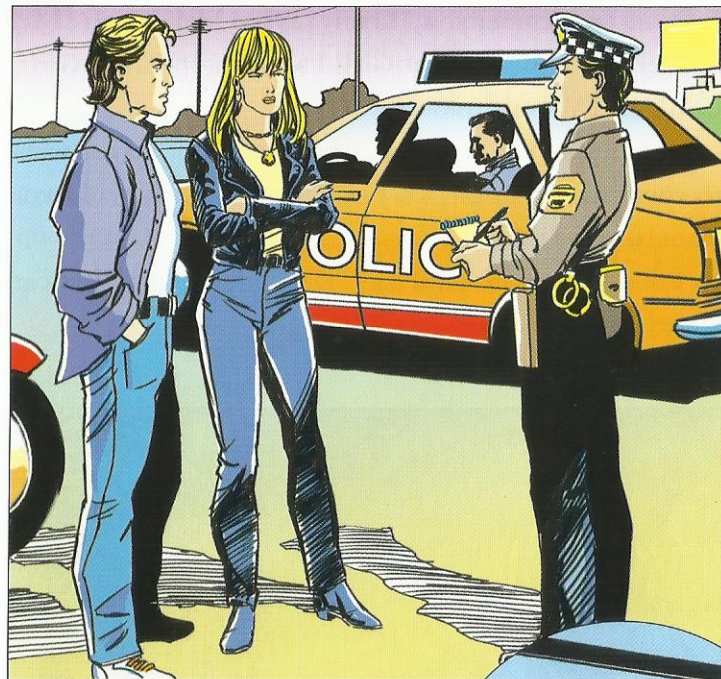
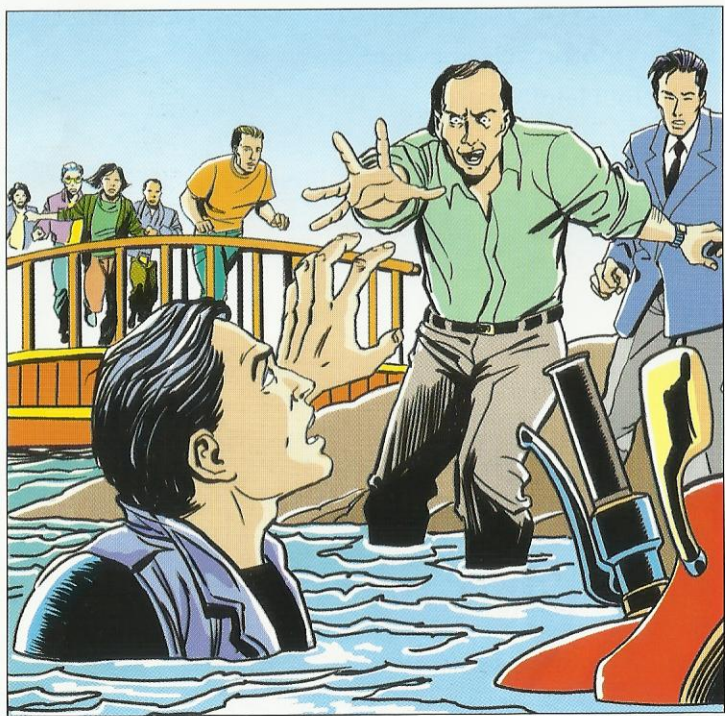
***Can we go slowly, please?***

Some people help Ned out of the water. More people are coming from the motel. Kenny runs across to Mel.

‘Are you OK?’ he asks her.

‘Yes, I’m OK,’ she says. ‘Are you all right?’

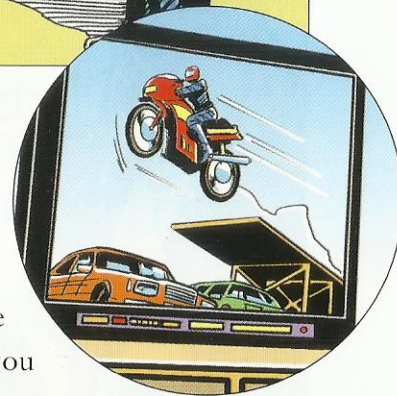
‘Yes,’ says Kenny. ‘I’m all right.’



Soon after, the police arrive and take Ned away. Kenny tells a policeman his story. Then Mel tells the policewoman her story.

‘Do I know your face?’ the policewoman asks Mel. ‘Are you famous?’

Mel laughs. ‘Perhaps you do,’ she says. ‘I’m on TV sometimes.’

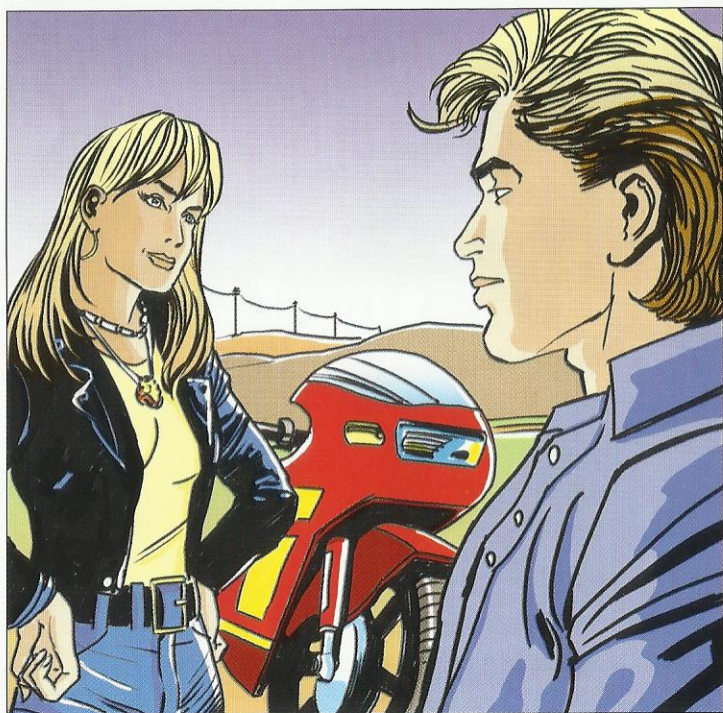




'Now I remember you,' Kenny says to Mel. 'You're Mel Palmer, the famous Stunt Girl! I see you on 'Stunt Girls, USA', on TV sometimes.'

Mel smiles. 'Yes, that's me,' she says. 'Now, do you want to come to San Francisco on my motorcycle, or do you want to go on the bus?'

'I'm coming with you!' says Kenny, laughing. 'But can we go *slowly*, please?'



ACTIVITIES

Before Reading

1 Look at the picture on the cover of the book. Now answer these questions.

1 Do you think the story is

- a  funny?
- b  sad?
- c  exciting?
- d  frightening?

2 Where do you think the story happens?

- a  China
- b  America
- c  England
- d  Italy

2 Read the back cover of the book. Now answer these questions.

- 1 Do you think Kenny is a policeman?
- 2 Does the robber shoot Kenny?
- 3 Do you think the girl is the robber?



## *Glossary*

- bathroom** the room where you can bath and wash
- blond** a yellow-white colour
- climb** go up or down using hands and feet
- famous** a famous person is someone who many people know
- gun** a thing that shoots bullets to kill people
- lock (v)** use a key in a door
- manager** someone who controls a business
- motel** a building where you can pay to stay in a room and  
have your meals
- news** a TV or radio programme that tells about the things  
that happen
- news-reader** someone who reads the news
- police** the men and women who catch criminals
- rob** take something that is not yours
- robber** someone who takes something that is not theirs
- search** look carefully for something
- stunt** something dangerous and exciting
- swim** move your body through water using your arms and  
legs
- wig** false hair

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