

'San Francisco,' Nick said. He laughed. 'But I'm not on vacation – I'm working. I'm a travel writer, and I'm doing a book on mountains in North America. I've got some great pictures of your mountain.'

The two men looked up at Whistler Mountain behind the village. It looked very beautiful in the morning sun.

'Do you travel a lot, then?' asked the waiter.

'All the time,' Nick said. 'I write books, and I write for travel magazines. I write about everything – different countries, towns, villages, rivers, mountains, people . . .'

The waiter looked over Nick's head. 'There's a girl across the street,' he said. 'Do you know her?'

Nick turned his head and looked. 'No, I don't.'

'Well, she knows you, I think,' the waiter said. 'She's watching you very carefully.' He gave Nick a smile. 'Have a nice day!' He went away, back into the café.

Nick looked at the girl across the street. She was about twenty-five, and she was very pretty. 'She *is* watching me,' Nick thought. Then the girl turned and looked in one of the shop windows. After a second or two, she looked back at Nick again.

Nick watched her. 'She looks worried,' he thought. 'What's she doing? Is she waiting for somebody?'

Suddenly, the girl smiled. Then she walked across the street, came up to Nick's table, and sat down. She put her bag down on the table. The bag was half-open.



The girl came up to Nick's table.

'Hi! I'm Jan,' she said. 'Do you remember me? We met at a party in Toronto.'

'Hi, Jan,' said Nick. He smiled. 'I'm Nick. But we didn't meet at a party in Toronto. I don't go to parties very often, and never in Toronto.'

'Oh,' the girl said. But she didn't get up or move away. 'Have some coffee,' said Nick. The story about the party in Toronto wasn't true, but it was a beautiful morning, and she was a pretty girl. 'Maybe it was a party in Montréal. Or New York.'

The girl laughed. 'OK. Maybe it was. And yes, I'd love some coffee.'

When she had her coffee, Nick asked, 'What are you doing in Whistler? Or do you live here?'

'Oh no,' she said. 'I'm just, er, just travelling through. And what are *you* doing here?'

'I'm a travel writer,' Nick said, 'and I'm writing a book about famous mountains.'

'That's interesting,' she said. But her face was worried, not interested, and she looked across the road again.

A man with very short, white hair walked across the road. He was about sixty years old, and he was tall and thin. The girl watched him.

'Are you waiting for someone?' asked Nick.

'No,' she said quickly. Then she asked, 'Where are you going next, Nick?'

'To Vancouver, for three or four days,' he said.

'When are you going?' she asked.

'Later this morning,' he said. There was a letter in the top of the girl's half-open bag. Nick could see some of the writing, and he read it because he saw the word

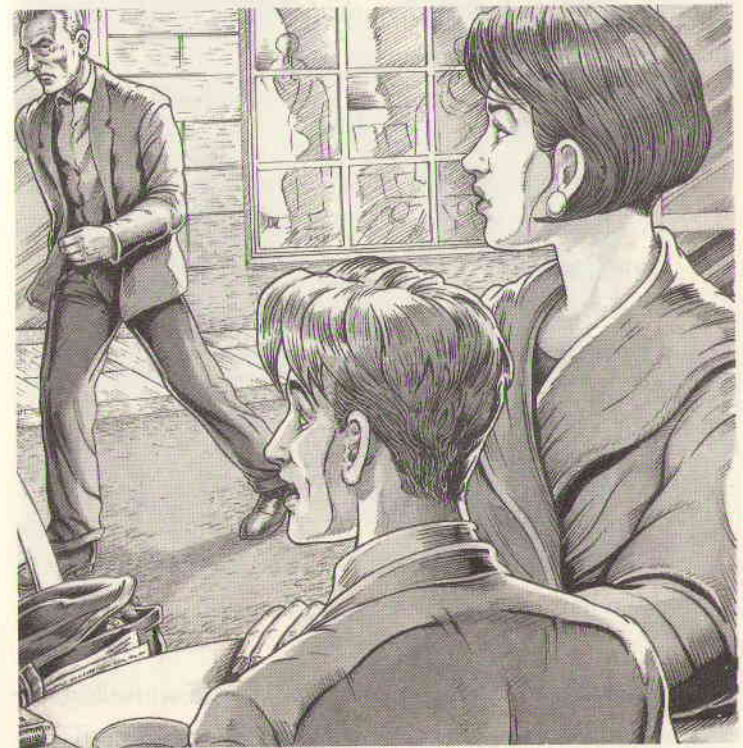
'Vancouver' - . . . *and we can meet at the Empress Hotel, Victoria, Vancouver Island, on Friday afternoon . . .*

'So she's going to Vancouver too,' he thought.

Suddenly the girl said, 'Do you like movies?'

'Movies? Yes, I love movies,' he said. 'Why?'

'I know a man, and he - he loves movies, and going to the cinema,' she said slowly. 'People call him "Mr



'Are you waiting for someone?' asked Nick.

Hollywood". She smiled at Nick. 'Can I call you "Mr Hollywood" too?'

Nick laughed. 'OK,' he said. 'And what can I call you?'

She smiled again. 'Call me Mystery Girl,' she said.

'That's a good name for you,' said Nick.

Just then, the man with white hair came into the café. He did not look at Nick or the girl, but he sat at a table near them. He asked the waiter for some breakfast, then he began to read a magazine.

The girl looked at the man, then quickly looked away again.

'Do you know him?' Nick asked her.

'No,' she said. She finished her coffee quickly and got up. 'I must go now,' she said.

Nick stood up, too. 'Nice to—' he began.

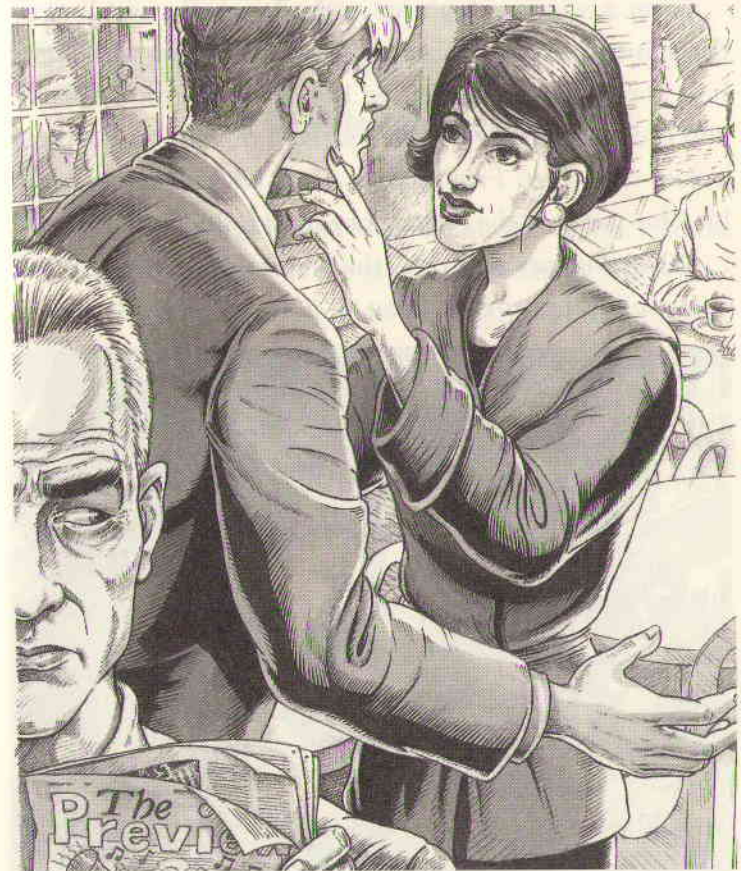
But the girl suddenly took his face between her hands, and kissed him on the mouth. 'Drive carefully, Mr Hollywood. Goodbye,' she said, with a big, beautiful smile. Then she turned and walked quickly away.

Nick sat down again and watched her. She walked down the road and into a big hotel.

'Now what,' thought Nick, 'was *that* all about?'

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The man with white hair watched Nick and waited. After four or five minutes, Nick finished his coffee, took his books and his camera, and left the café. His car was just outside



'Drive carefully, Mr Hollywood.'

the girl's hotel, and he walked slowly along the street to it.

The man with white hair waited a second, then quickly followed Nick.