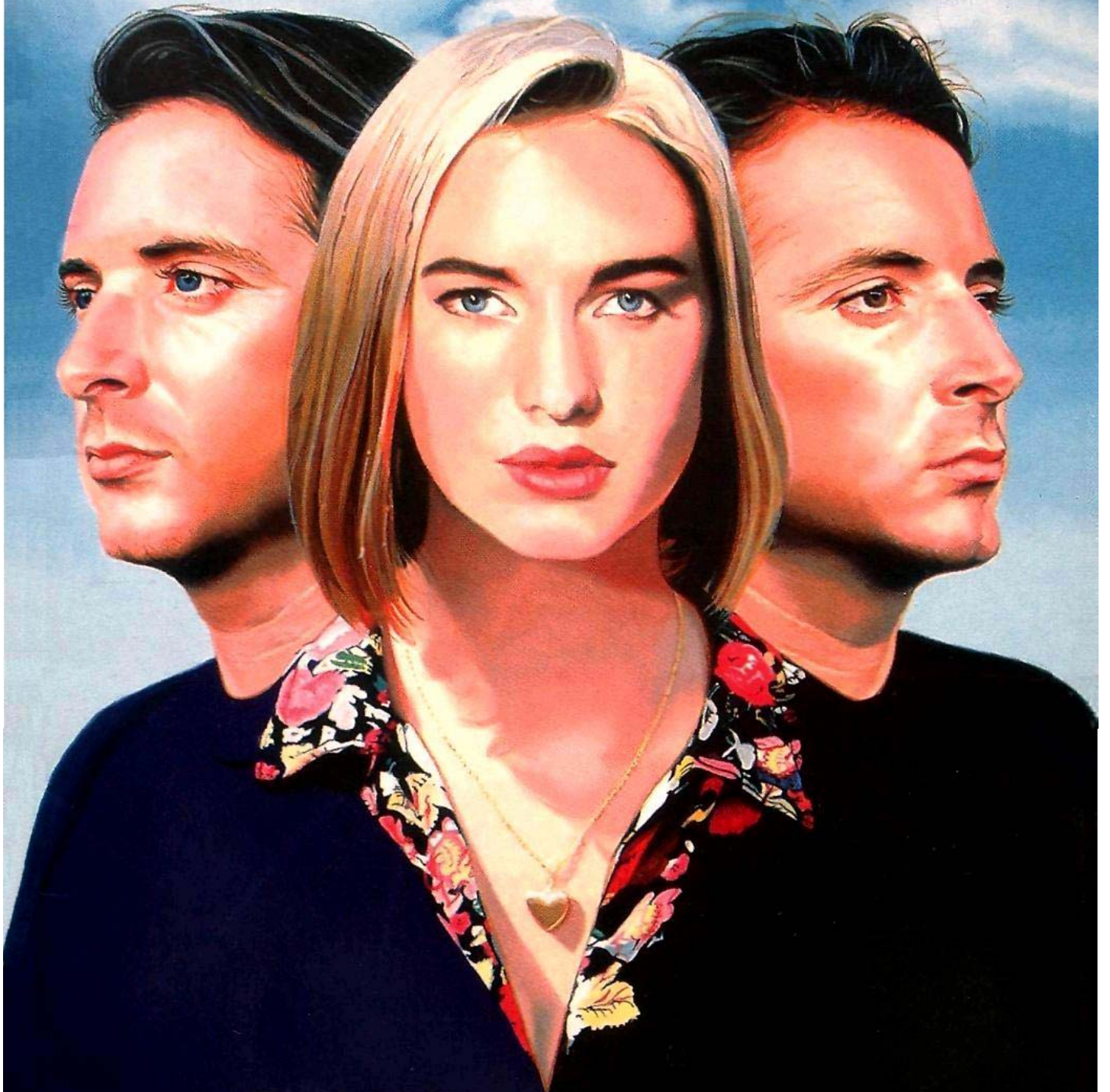


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# BROWN EYES



**Paul Stewart**

PENGUIN READERS

# *Brown Eyes*

*'A man is pretending to be me,' I said. 'Why?'*

Every year, Peter and Susan Reed go to Lea-on-Sea for their holiday; every year they stay at the Hotel Vista.

This year things start to go wrong. A man there is pretending to be Peter. But why? Is he friendly or dangerous — what does he want?

Will this, their thirteenth visit to Lea-on-Sea, be their last visit?

Paul Stewart lives with his family in Brighton, and writes books for children and young people. He has one son - his name is Joseph, and one daughter - her name is Anna.

He was a teacher of English in Greece, Germany and Sri Lanka. He went to Kenya, India, Australia, Malaysia, America and all over Europe, too - but never to Lea-on-Sea!

*Dictionary words:*

- Some words in this book are dark black. Find them in your dictionary or try to understand them with no dictionary first.

# *Brown Eyes*

PAUL STEWART

Level 1

Series Editors: Andy Hopkins and Jocelyn Potter

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Penguin Books Ltd., both companies being subsidiaries of Pearson Plc

We arrived at our hotel in Lea-on-Sea early on Saturday morning. The Hotel Vista. Susan and I always stay there. It is very quiet, very friendly and the food is good. I opened the door, and we walked in.

‘Good morning, Mrs Brown,’ I said.

‘Mr and Mrs Reed,’ she said. ‘It’s good to see you again.’

‘It’s good to be here again,’ I said.





‘Cup of coffee?’ she said. ‘Before you go up to your room.’

‘Thank you,’ I said.

‘Where’s little Mary?’ asked Susan. Mary was Mrs Brown’s daughter.

‘She’s in the garden,’ said Mrs Brown and **laughed**. ‘But she’s not little! Mary’s a tall young woman now.’

‘How old is she?’ Susan asked.

‘Fifteen,’ said Mrs Brown.

‘Fifteen!’ I said. ‘Time goes quickly!’

‘I know,’ said Mrs Brown. ‘Now, coffee! Before I **forget** again.’ She walked to the kitchen.

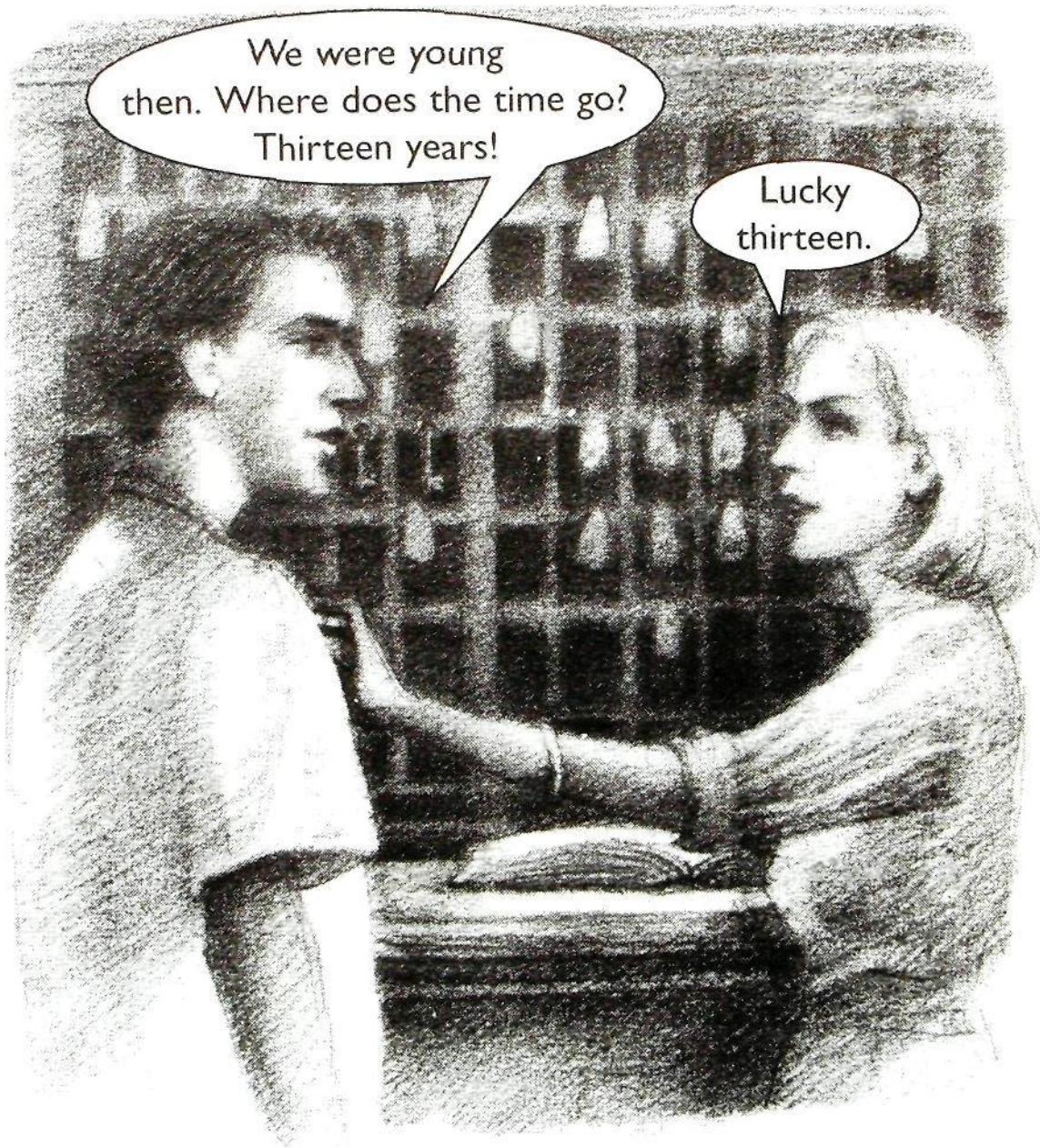
Susan looked at me. 'I love it here, Peter,' she said.

'I know,' I said.

'When did we first meet?' she asked. 'Eleven years ago? Twelve?'

'Wrong,' I said. 'It'll be thirteen years on Tuesday,' I said. 'In the cafe.'

'Ah, yes,' said Susan, and shut her eyes.



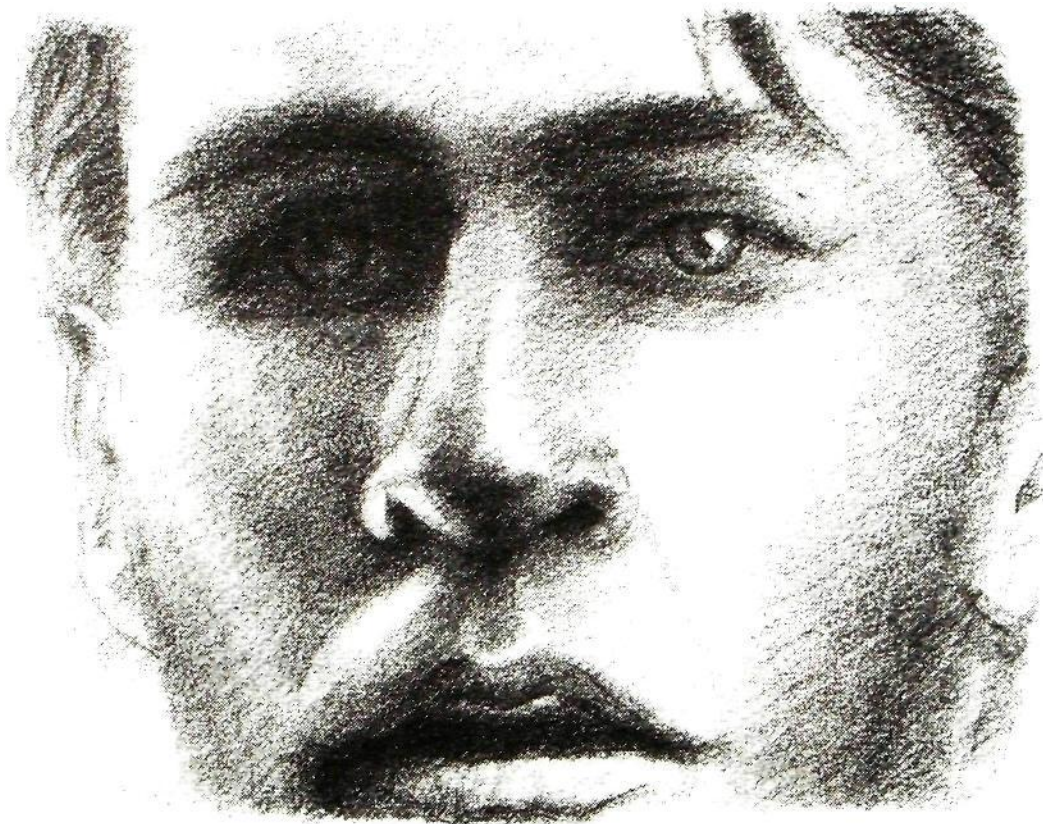


The door opened, and Mary Brown looked in. She was tall.

‘Hello,’ she said to Susan. ‘And hello again,’ she said to me.

‘Again?’ I said.

‘Yes. Don’t you remember? Yesterday. You said “hello” in the bank.’



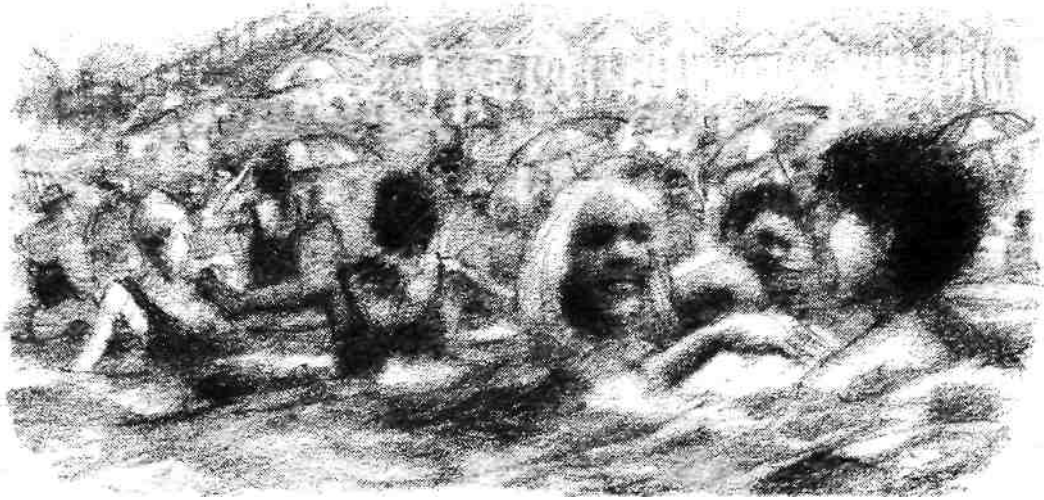
‘Oh, y. . . yes!’ I said, and **pretended** to remember. ‘That was you!’

Mary smiled. ‘I’ll see you later,’ she said. ‘Goodbye!’ ‘Goodbye,’ we said. She shut the door. Susan **turned** to me.

‘Why did you pretend?’ she asked me.

‘I don’t know,’ I said.

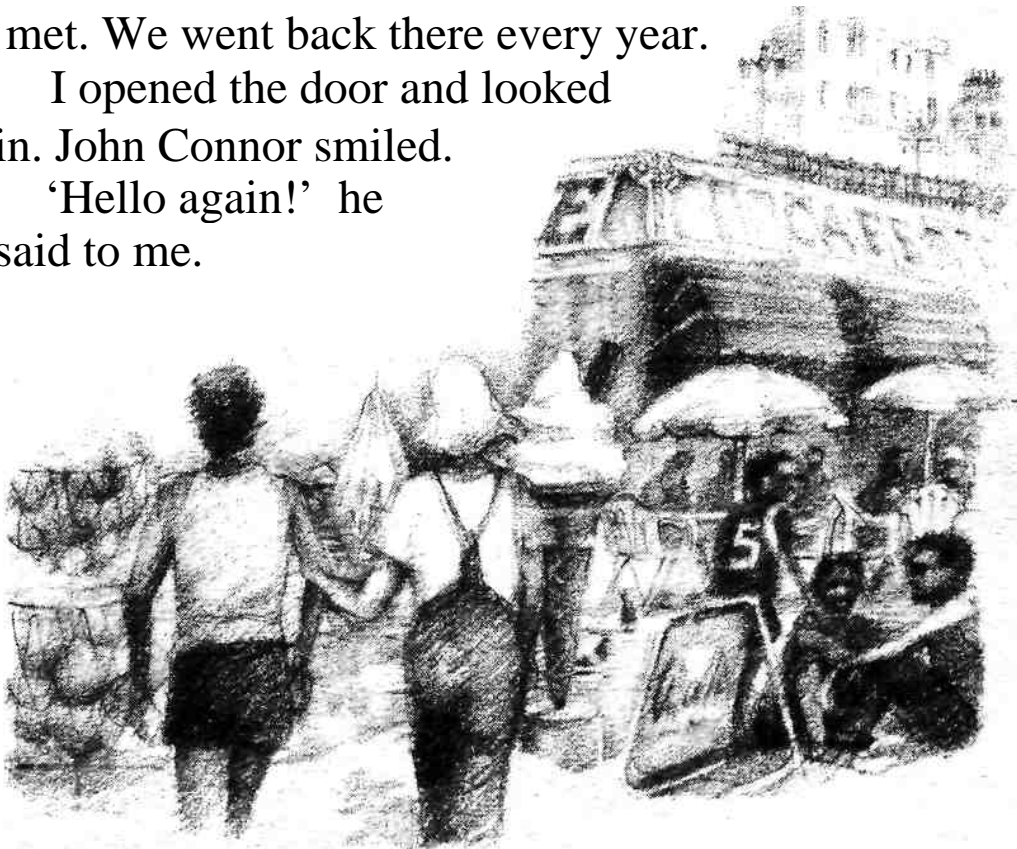
The sun was hot in the afternoon. After lunch, Susan and I walked down to the sea. We swam. The water was cold.



After that, we walked across to Connor's Coffee House. It was a small, quiet café near the sea. The café! The place Susan and I first met. We went back there every year.

I opened the door and looked in. John Connor smiled.

'Hello again!' he said to me.





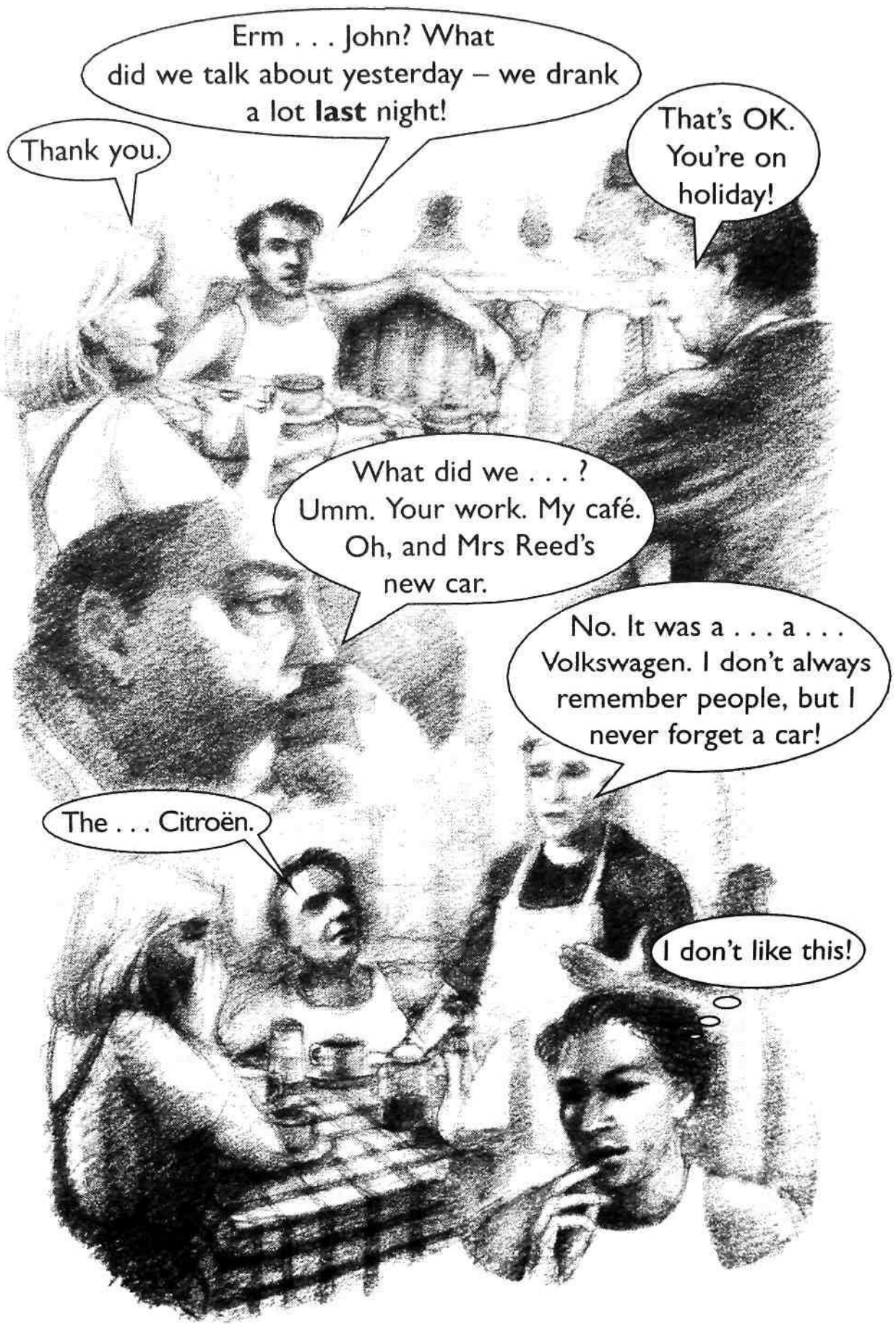
And this time with Mrs Reed . . . What can I get you? Coffee? Or a cold drink?

Not again!

Two coffees, please. One black, one white.

First Mary. Now John Connor. I don't understand.

Perhaps there are two men in Lea-on-Sea with big noses and black hair.



Erm . . . John? What did we talk about yesterday – we drank a lot **last** night!

Thank you.

That's OK. You're on holiday!

What did we . . . ?  
Umm. Your work. My café.  
Oh, and Mrs Reed's new car.

No. It was a . . . a . . . Volkswagen. I don't always remember people, but I never forget a car!

The . . . Citroën.

I don't like this!

It was our fourth night at the Hotel Vista. We were at a table in the **restaurant**, but I did not want to eat. I was **afraid**. Very afraid. Things were not right in Le-on-Sea.



On Sunday, it was the old man in the newspaper shop.



On Monday, the man in the bank . . .



. . . and the woman in the cinema.



Yesterday, the girl in the shoe shop.



And this afternoon, the woman in the Italian restaurant. All of them smiled at me and said, 'Hello *again!*'

‘A man is pretending to be me,’ I said. ‘Why?’

‘I don’t know,’ said Susan. ‘But it’s not important. We’re . . .’

‘Not important?’ I **shouted**. ‘I think it is. I . . . I’m going to the police!’

‘No,’ said Susan. ‘They’ll laugh at you. We’ll find the man. Lea-on-Sea isn’t very big. It’ll be easy.’

I looked down. I didn’t want to meet the man!

Susan looked into my eyes. She took my hand. ‘I’m afraid, too,’ she said.



Later that evening, we walked down to the sea. The sun was red and yellow. The water was light blue.

‘Today is an important day,’ said Susan.

‘Important?’ I said.

‘Thirteen years,’ she said. ‘You and me! Did you forget?’

‘I? . . . Yes, I forgot,’ I said quietly.

‘Do you love me?’ Susan asked.

‘Oh, yes,’ I said, and turned to her.

‘Good,’ she said. ‘I love you, too.’

We **kissed**. And for the first time on our holiday, I was happy!





Suddenly, Susan moved back.

‘Look!’ she was right. ‘It’s him! At the café!’

She was right. There was a man with a big nose and black hair. He shut the café door and turned right. At the cinema, he turned right again, and walked quickly away.

‘Run!’ said Susan. ‘We don’t want to lose him.’ We arrived at the cinema and looked down the road.

‘Where is he?’ I said.

‘There!’ said Susan.

I saw him turn left at the bank.

‘Quickly!’ I shouted.



We ran across the road after the man.

‘Don’t go!’ I shouted.

But he didn’t hear me. We ran to the bank. There, we stopped. I looked up and down the road.

The man was not there.

‘Where is he?’ I said.

‘I don’t know,’ said Susan. ‘But we’ll see him again. I know we will. Come on,’ she said. ‘We’ll have a drink at the hotel.’



We walked back to the Hotel Vista slowly. Susan looked in the cafés and restaurants but she didn't see the man again. Luckily!

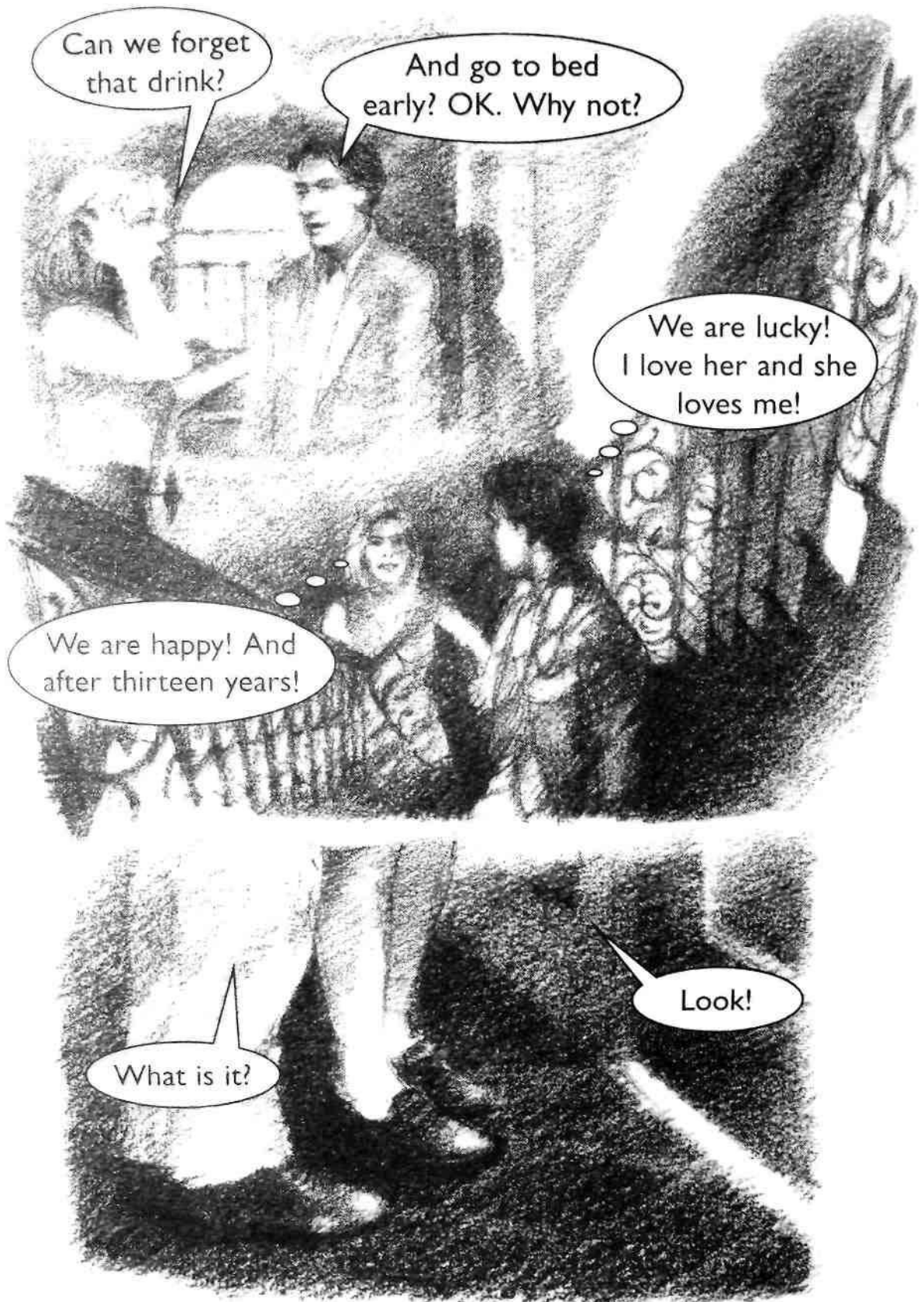
'Perhaps we'll never see him again,' I said.

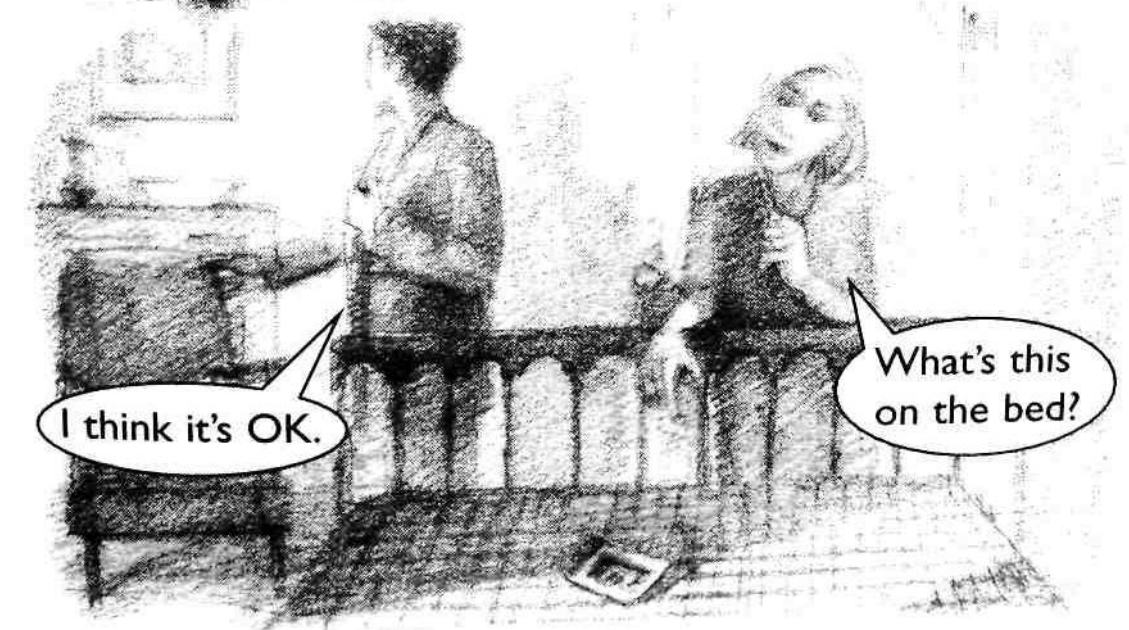
'Perhaps,' said Susan quietly.

We arrived at the door of the hotel at ten o'clock. We heard the television. We walked in. We saw Mrs Brown, but she didn't see us.

I smiled. 'Sleeping,' I said.







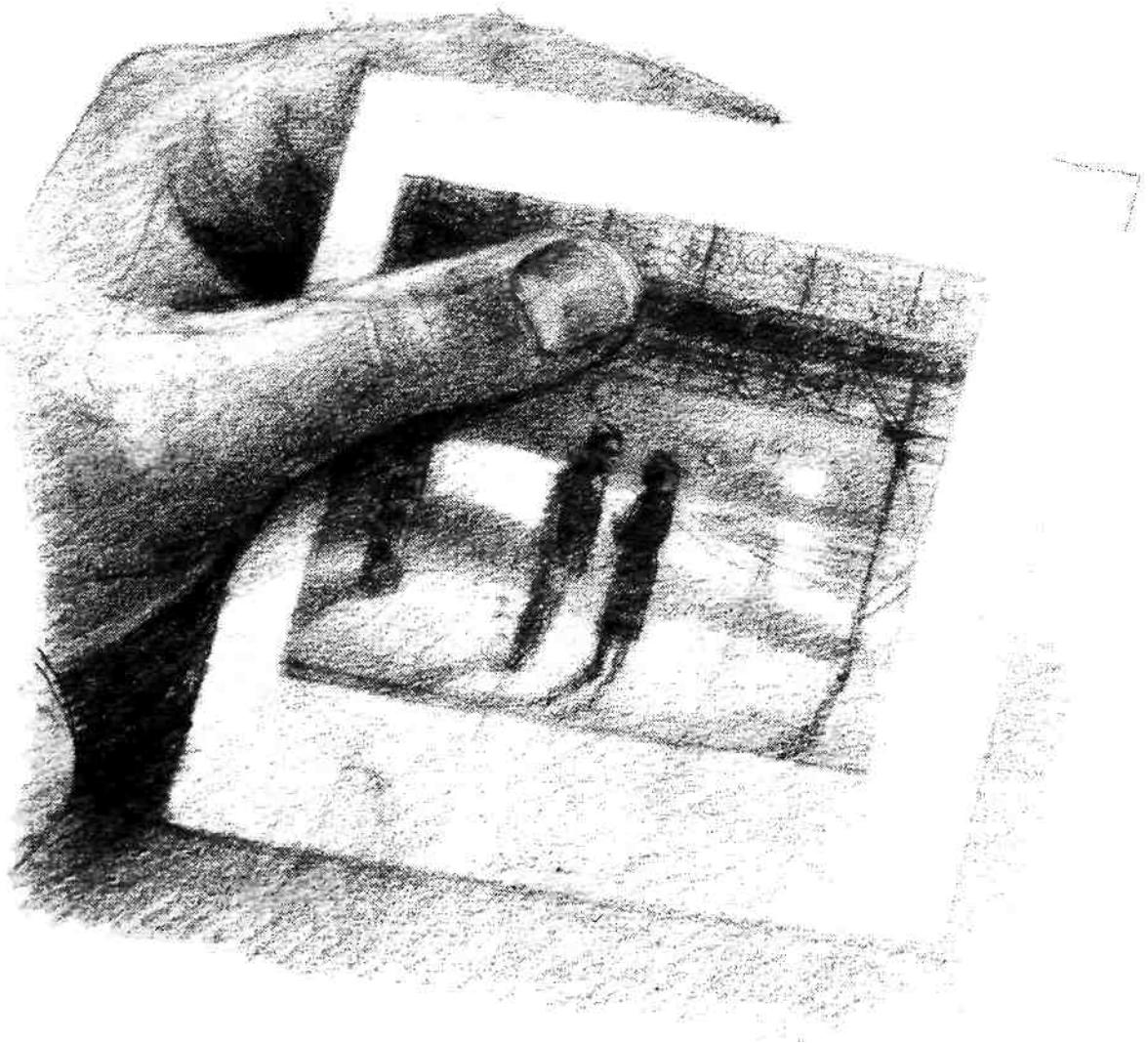
I walked over to the bed. On it, face down, was a photograph. Who was the picture of? I was afraid to look. I took the photograph in my hand and slowly turned it over.

‘What the . . . ?’ I shouted.

‘What is it?’ said Susan. ‘Can I see?’

‘You can,’ I said. ‘But it isn’t good!’

I gave her the photo. Susan looked at it, and jumped back. ‘But it’s you and me!’ she said.



‘I know,’ I said, and looked again.

It was Susan and me. Down at the sea.

‘That man!’ said Susan, excitedly. ‘He was there. It’s *his* photo!’

Suddenly, we heard a noise. The door opened. And there he was, the man with my face. And he had a gun in his hand.



‘Very clever!’ he said quietly. ‘It was me.’

He shut the door.

‘Don’t move,’ he said. ‘Or I’ll **shoot.**’

I looked at the man in **horror**. I wasn't afraid of his gun - I was afraid of his face! He had my nose, my mouth, my ears, my hair . . .



Susan! Come back here.  
He's dangerous.

It's the eyes. Peter's are  
blue. His are brown.



Get back!

Susan! Listen to  
him. Please!



He won't shoot.  
Will you, Stephen?



‘You know him!’ I said.

‘Yes,’ Susan answered. ‘His name is Stephen Griggs. I worked with him fifteen years ago.’

‘I loved you,’ said the man. ‘We were happy.’



‘You’re a bad woman, Susan Barker,’ he said. ‘You pretended to love me.’

‘I did not! And my name is Reed now.’

‘Stay back!’ he shouted.

Susan stopped.

‘Those cold brown eyes,’ she said. ‘Ugh!’

‘Did he always have my face?’ I asked.

‘No,’ said Susan. ‘I don’t know the game he’s playing.’

‘You will,’ said the man. ‘You will.’

He looked at the photograph in my hand.

‘That’s for you,’ he said. ‘You can look at it, and remember.’

‘Remember what?’ I said.

He smiled. ‘Your last walk with Susan,’ he said. ‘Before you go to **prison.**’



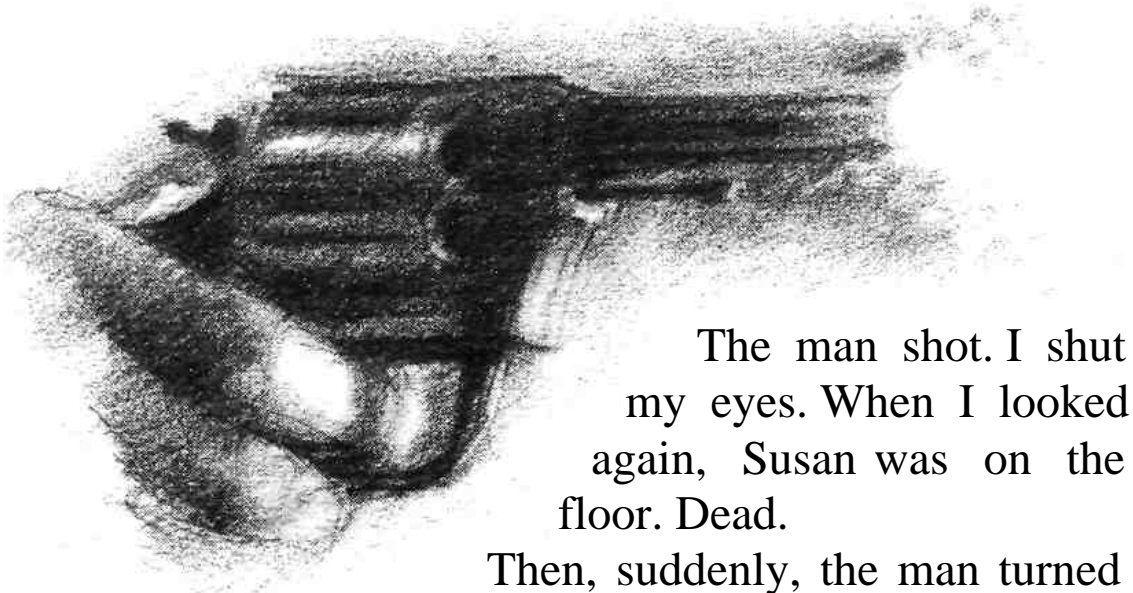
‘Prison?’ I said. ‘Why?’

‘Because you shot Susan,’ he said

‘I didn’t . . .’

‘You will,’ he said. ‘Watch!’ And he turned and put the gun to Susan’s head.

‘NOOOOOO!’ I shouted, and jumped at him.



The man shot. I shut my eyes. When I looked again, Susan was on the floor. Dead.

Then, suddenly, the man turned and hit me on the head. It all went black — and I fell down, down, down.



After some time, I opened my eyes again. I remembered.

‘You shot her!’ I said.

‘No,’ the man smiled - with my smile! ‘You shot her. My plan is going very well.’

I tried to get up, but it was difficult.

‘I loved her,’ I said, quietly.

‘I, too,’ he said. ‘But she was with you. All those years. Now . . .’ He smiled again and looked at the gun.

‘Do you plan to shoot me, too?’ I said.



‘Oh, no,’ he said. ‘I said, you’re going to prison. Perhaps there, you’ll understand. For me, Susan was dead before I shot her. Now she’s dead for you, too.’

He came over to me, and put his hand over my mouth. Then I heard Mrs Brown at the door.

‘What are you doing in there?’ she shouted.

‘Mfff. ... mmwff!’ I said.

‘I shot Susan!’ the man answered for me. ‘And now she’s dead. Dead! DEAD! Oh, Susan, I’m sorry!’

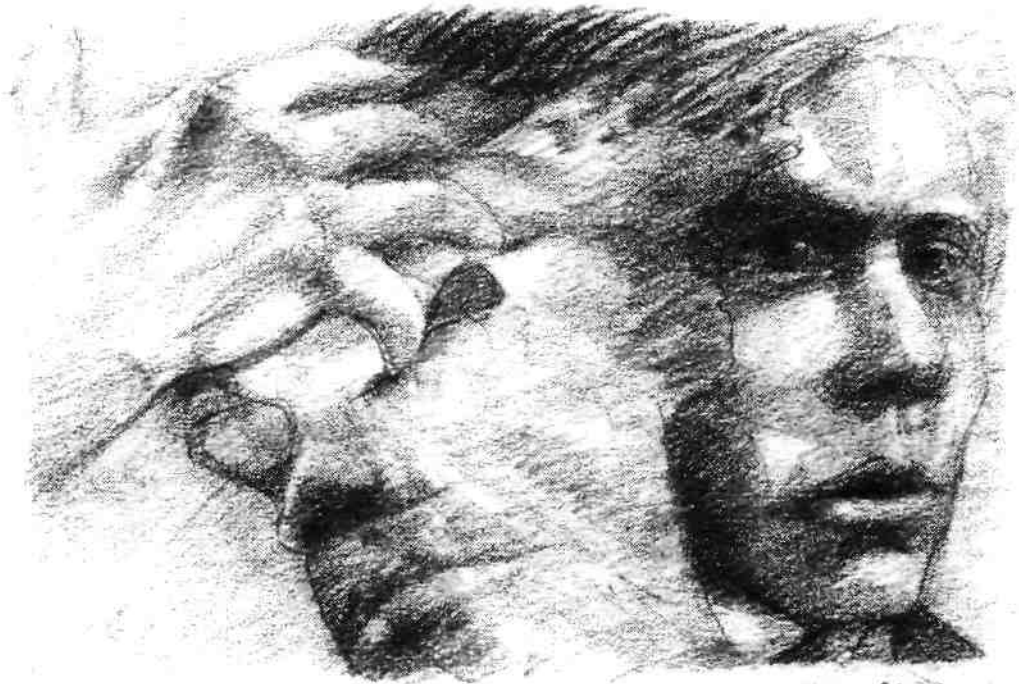


‘There,’ he said. ‘Now she’ll phone the police. And they’ll come — for you!’

He walked over to the window and looked out.

‘Remember,’ I said. ‘You’ve got my face, too.’

‘Not for long,’ he said. In horror, I watched him slowly take the **mask** from his face.



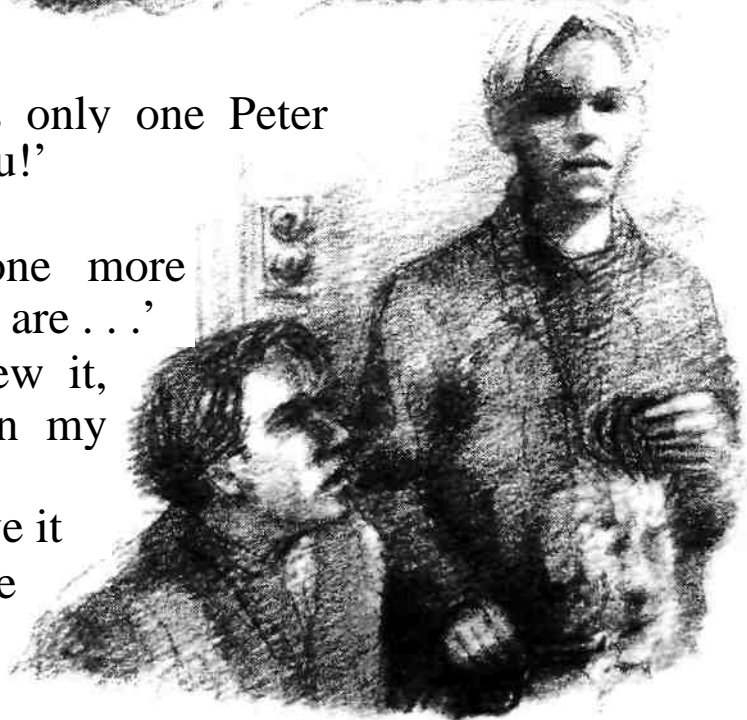
‘Now there’s only one Peter Reed again. You!’

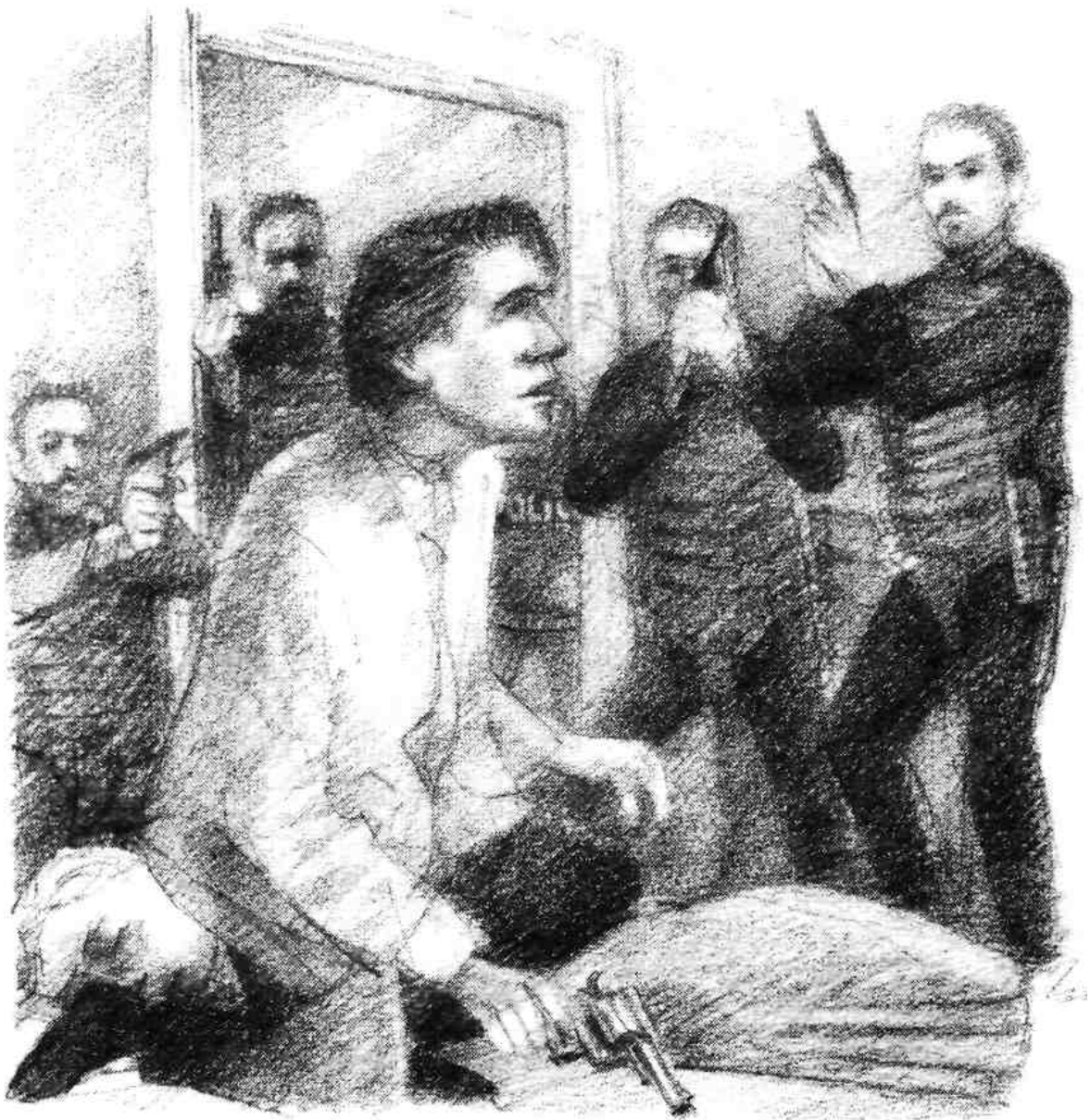
‘But. . .’

‘Oh, and one more thing. Here you are . . .’

Before I knew it, the gun was in my hand!

‘You can give it to the police’ he laughed.





I watched the door. It opened and four policemen walked in. They looked at the dead woman. They looked at the gun in my hand.

The first policeman walked over to me. ‘You come with us,’ he said.

‘I didn’t ... It isn’t ... I can’t ...’ I said. I didn’t want to go to prison.

‘Come with us,’ he said again. ‘You can talk later. We’ve got all night.’

## EXERCISES

### Vocabulary Work

Look at these words:

*ago*            *forget*            *year*    *laugh*    *afraid*  
*pretend*    *restaurant*    *kiss*    *turn*    *shoot*  
*prison*    *in horror*    *last*    *shout*    *mask*

Do you understand them? Find them in a dictionary, then write sentences with the words.

### Comprehension

Answer these questions.

*Pages 5-9*

- 1 Why do Susan and Peter Reed like the Hotel Vista?
- 2 When did they first meet?
- 3 Where is Connor's Coffee House?

*Pages 10-15*

- 4 Why did Peter pretend the car was a Citroen?
- 5 Why did Susan not want to go to the police?
- 6 Who did Susan see near the cafe?

*Pages 16-21*

- 7 At what time did they arrive back at the hotel?
- 8 Susan and Peter thought that a man or woman was in their room. Why?
- 9 Who was in the photograph?

*Pages 22-25*

- 10 Why was Peter afraid?
- 11 Why were the man's eyes important?
- 12 How did Susan know Stephen Griggs?



*Pages 26-30*

- 13 Stephen did not shoot Peter. Why?
- 14 Peter did not answer Mrs Brown. Why?
- 15 What can Peter say to the police?

### **Discussion**

- 1 Is thirteen an unlucky number for you? Are some things lucky/unlucky?
- 2 Would you like to have a holiday in Lea-on-Sea? Why? If not, where? Why?
- 3 The police think that you shot someone! Where were you at 7.30 yesterday evening? Who was with you?

### **Writing**

- 1 You are Peter. Write a letter to your best friend (in 100 words). Tell him/her why you are in prison.
- 2 A policeman stays and questions Mrs Brown. Write down their questions and answers (80 words).

*Example:*

Policeman: What did you hear?

Mrs Brown: I heard a noise.

Policeman: At what time?



Every year, Peter and Susan go to Lea-on-Sea. Every year it is the same. But this year there is a man pretending to be Peter. Why? What does he want? Will this be their last visit?

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