

# 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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GIRL ON A MOTORCYCLE

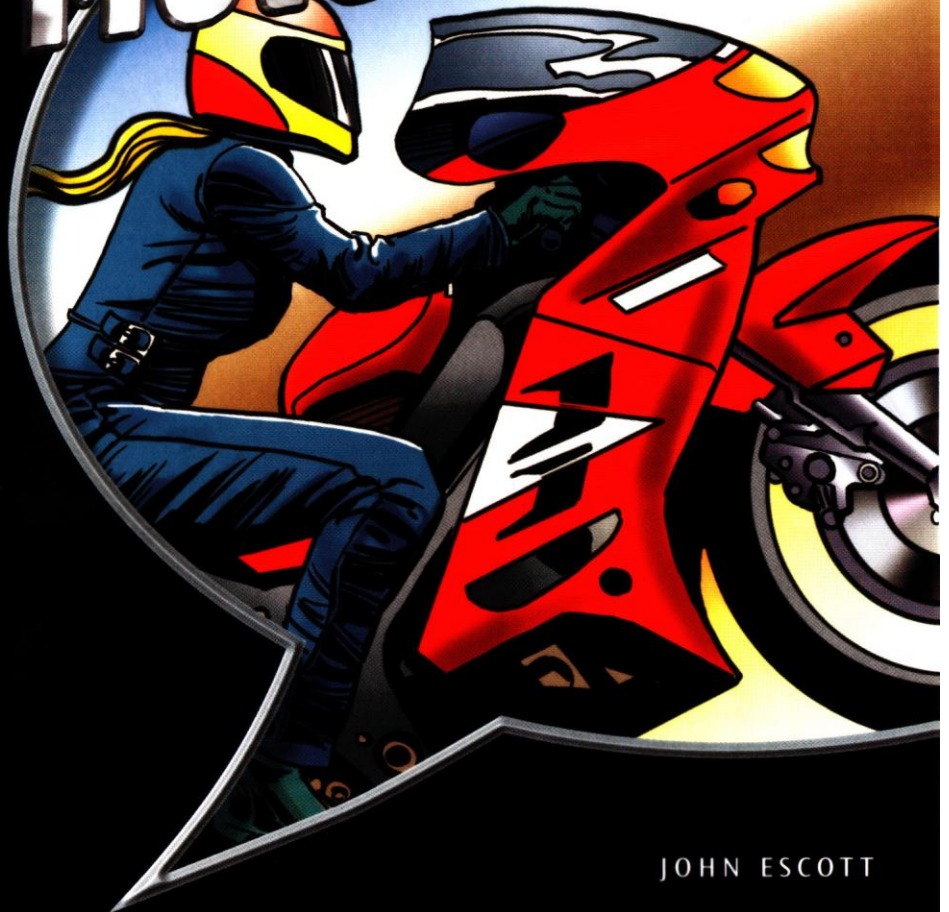
John Escott

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JOHN ESCOTT

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*Illustrated by*  
Kevin Hopgood

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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.



**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.’

**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.



*Girl on a Motorcycle*

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.





*Girl on a Motorcycle*

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?’

**5*****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.



*Girl on a Motorcycle*

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.

**6*****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.'





*Girl on a Motorcycle*

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.





*Girl on a Motorcycle*

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.

*Girl on a Motorcycle*

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!'

*Girl on a Motorcycle*

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!'

*Girl on a Motorcycle*

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!***

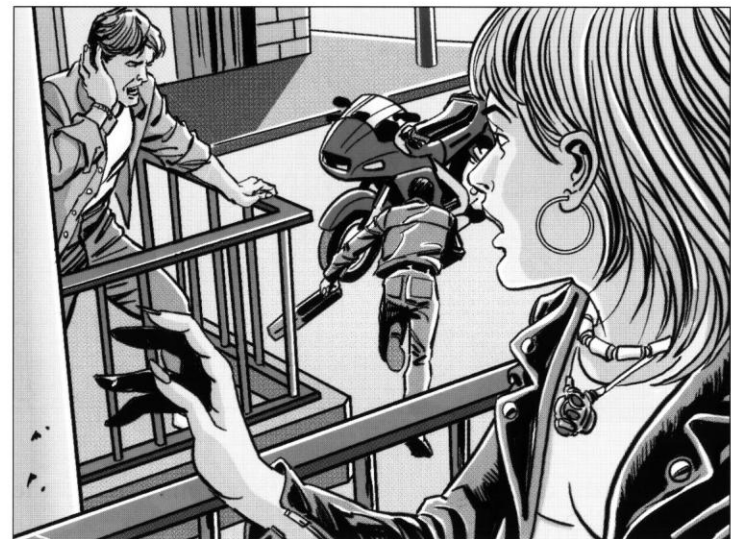
A minute later, Mel is looking across at the river from her room. Suddenly, she sees a man running.

'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.



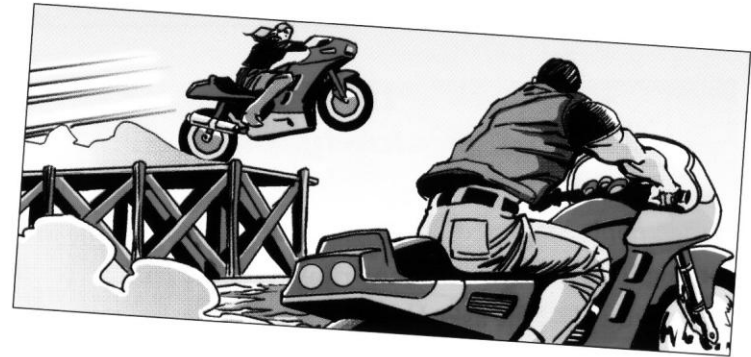


*Girl on a Motorcycle*

‘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!’



## 11

***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.’

*Girl on a Motorcycle*

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.’





*Girl on a Motorcycle*

'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?

## ACTIVITIES

### *While Reading*

#### 1 Read pages 1–4, then answer these questions.

- 1 How often do buses go to San Francisco?
- 2 Where is someone robbing a supermarket?
- 3 The supermarket manager says, 'Yes, we have some pictures.' How does he have pictures of the robber?
- 4 What is Kenny's room number in the motel?
- 5 How does the girl in room seventeen arrive at the motel?

#### 2 Read pages 5–8. Now answer these questions.

- a) Who  
... is talking about the robbery on TV?  
... does Kenny remember who has long blond hair?
- b) Where  
... is the girl eating her breakfast?  
... are Mel and Kenny going later that morning?

#### 3 Read pages 9–12.

Are these sentences true (T) or false (F)?

- |  | T                        | F                        |
|--|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| 1 Someone is watching Mel.             | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 2 Ned wants to phone the police.       | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 3 Kenny opens Mel's room with his key. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

## *Activities*

#### 4 Read pages 13–16. Now answer these questions.

- 1 Mel comes back to her room. Where does Kenny go first?
- 2 Who is Mel talking to on the phone?
- 3 What is the first thing Kenny sees in room eighteen?
- 4 What is in the bag?

#### 5 Read pages 17–20. Who says or thinks these words?

- 1 'What are you doing in my room?'
- 2 'You can't get away.'
- 3 'Why is he running?'
- 4 'He's the Los Angeles supermarket robber!'
- 5 'I can stop him!'

#### 6 Before you read pages 21–24, can you guess what happens?

- |  | YES                      | NO                       |
|--|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| 1 Ned kills Mel.                               | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 2 Mel falls off her motorcycle into the river. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 3 Mel stops Ned.                               | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 4 Kenny stops Ned.                             | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 5 Ned falls into the river.                    | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |



## Activities

## ACTIVITIES

*After Reading*

## 1 Put these twelve sentences in the right order.

- a ☐ Kenny sees the girl eating her breakfast.
- b ☐ Kenny finds the money from the robbery.
- c ☐ Kenny's bus arrives.
- d ☐ Ned takes a gun from his coat.
- e ☐ Kenny goes into room seventeen.
- f ☐ Ned's motorcycle goes into the river.
- g ☐ Kenny climbs into room eighteen.
- h ☐ Somebody robs a security guard outside a supermarket.
- i ☐ Mel gets on her motorcycle.
- j ☐ Kenny hears about the robbery on TV.
- k ☐ The police take Ned away.
- l ☐ Kenny sees a girl arrive at the motel on a motorcycle.

## 2 Use these words to join the sentences together.

or but and on

- 1 Kenny's bus arrives in town. An evening in summer.
- 2 The robber rides away. A camera is taking pictures.
- 3 The girl goes to the front desk. The man gives her a key.
- 4 Do you want to come to San Francisco on my motorcycle? Do you want to go on the bus?

## 3 Look at each picture, then answer the questions after it.



Who is this?

What is he/she doing?



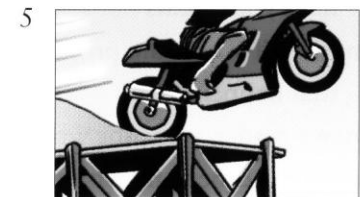
Who is this?

What is he/she doing?



Who is it?

What is he doing?



Who is riding this motorcycle?



Who is this?

What is he/she doing?



Who is writing?

*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