

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? (Word count 1,300)

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GIRL ON A MOTORCYCLE John Escott

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JOHN ESCOTT

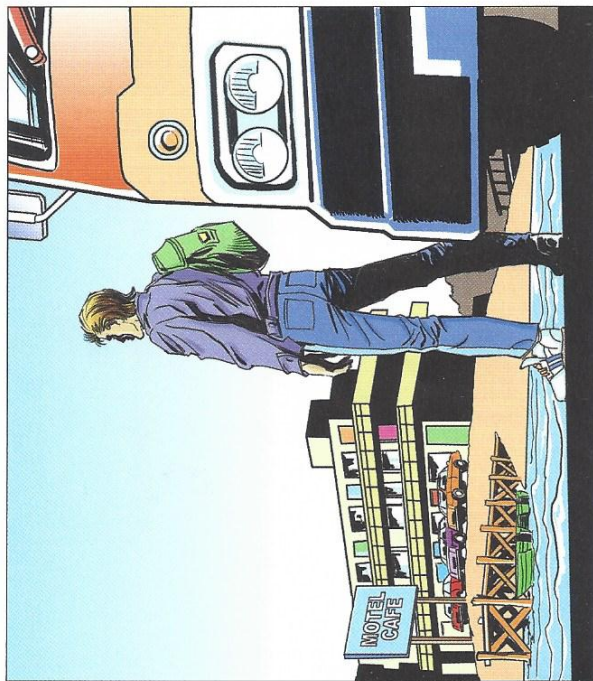
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1

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

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.'

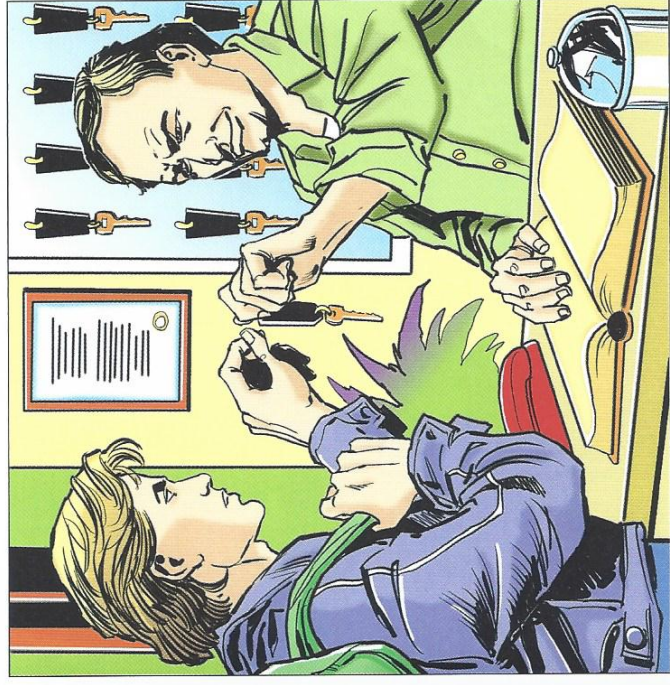


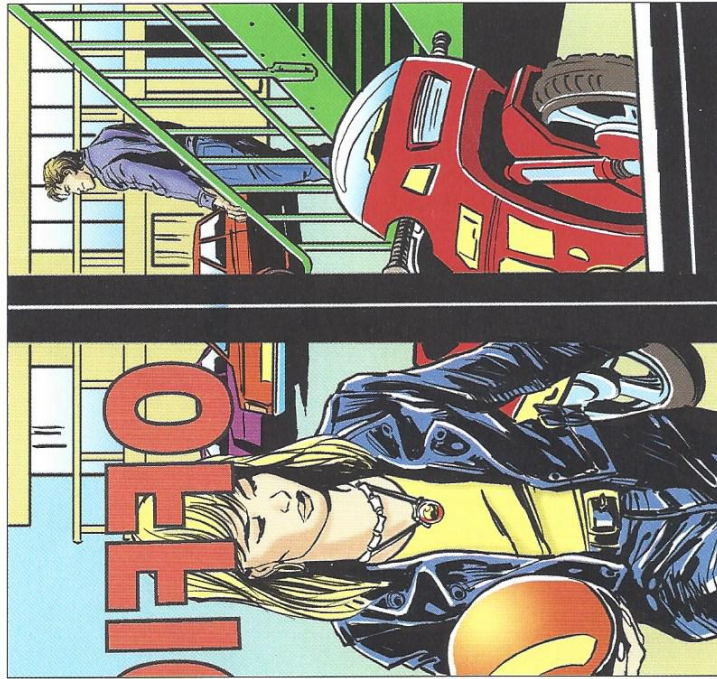
Room twenty-three

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.





An hour later, Kenny comes down to eat.

'I'm hungry,' he thinks.

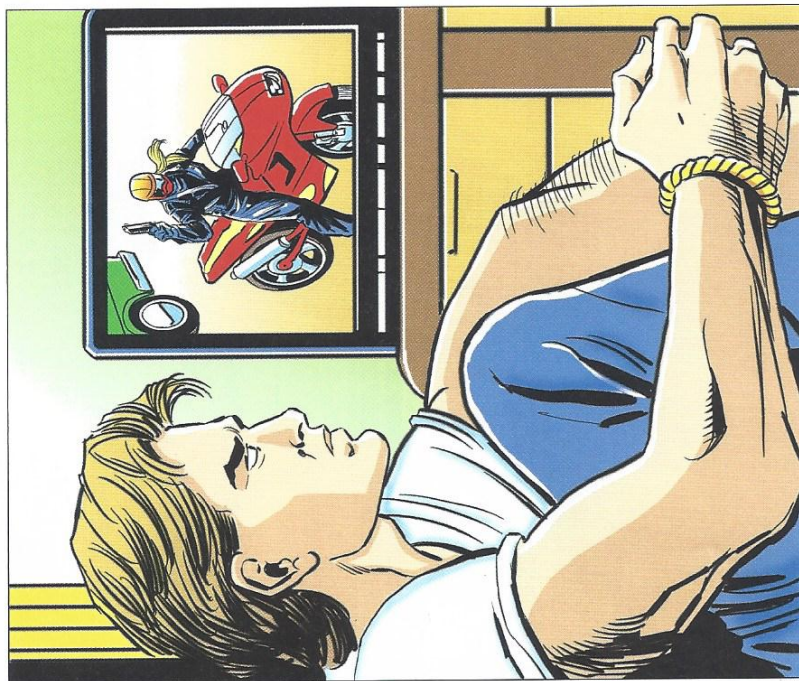
He sees a girl arrive on a motorcycle. She walks to the front desk, and the woman gives her a key.

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

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

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.'

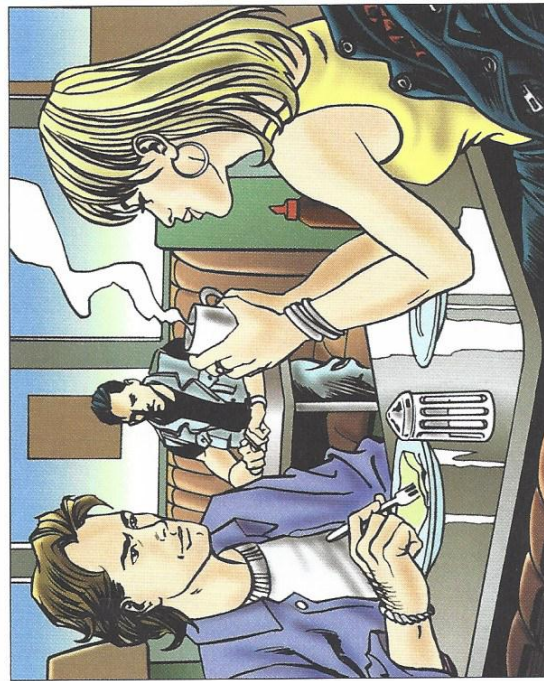
'Where are you from?' asks Kenny.

'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.

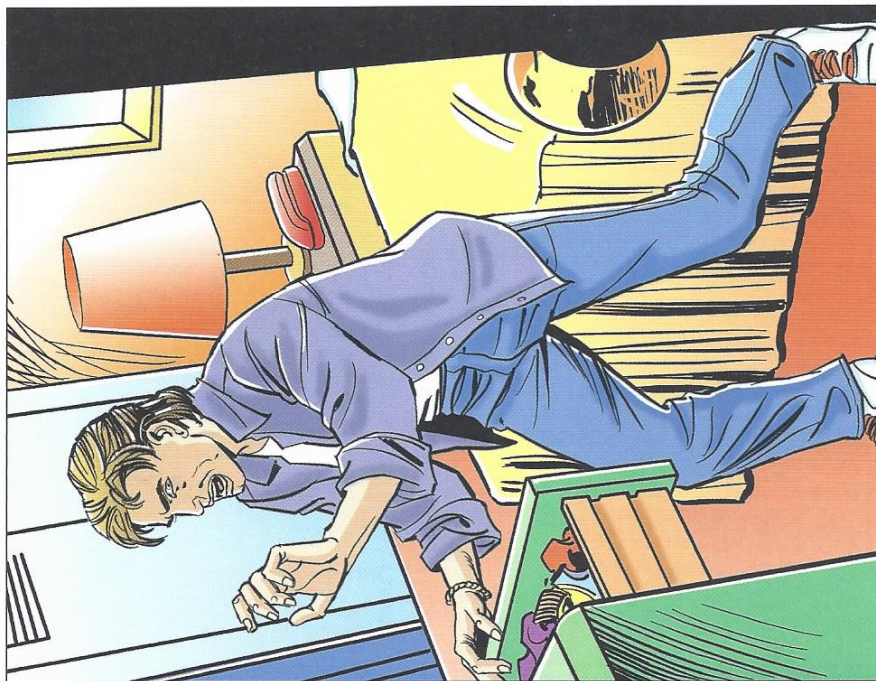
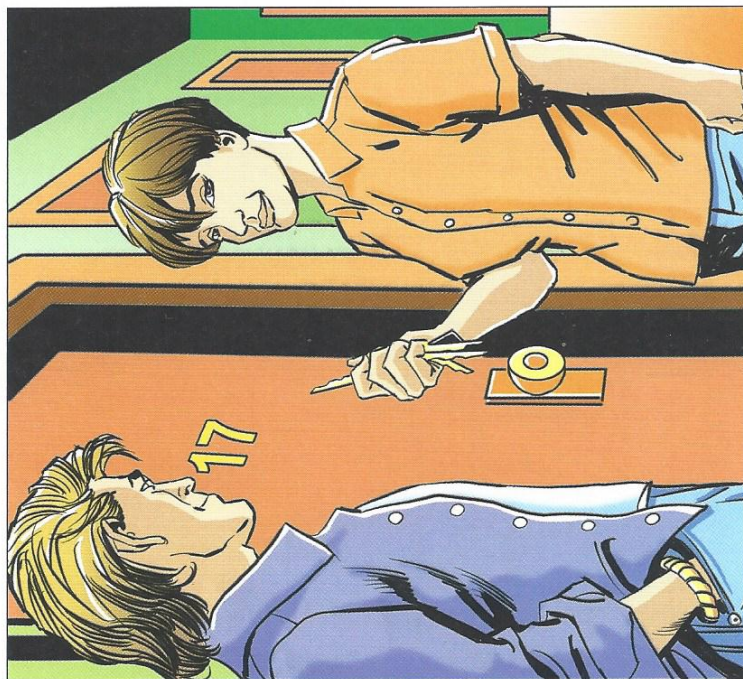
'How can I get into her room?' he thinks.



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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.

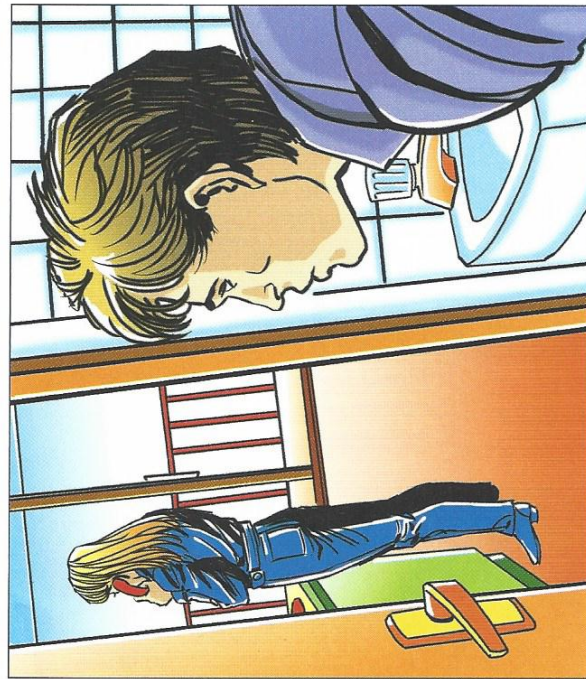
Then he hears somebody opening the door with a key.
It's Mel!

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.

