

IT'S A LONG STORY

1

Judy Parker is twenty-two. She is a medical student. Judy is intelligent and very pretty, with a good sense of humour. She is a nice woman. Her boyfriend's name is Sam Watson. Sam is twenty-seven. He works in a bank as assistant manager. He is good-looking, but he is not a very nice man. Judy loves Sam very much. Sam loves money, cars, good food, whisky, travel and beautiful women.

2

Judy is worried. She doesn't know where Sam is. The bank manager doesn't know where Sam is, either. He is very worried.

Sam is in Brazil, in a small town on the coast near Rio de Janeiro, with £50,000 of the bank's money. He is sitting in a bar near the beach, drinking a large martini and writing a letter to Judy.

3

Judy is at home. (She lives in a small flat near the bank. It's not very nice.) She's in the living room, drinking a cup of coffee and thinking. Judy's very worried, because she doesn't know what to do. She loves Sam, and she doesn't want to tell the police where he is. But she doesn't want to go to Rio, either. She wants a quiet life.

Judy goes to the window and looks out. There's a police car in the street. Two big policemen are walking towards her house.

4

Hello - is that Croxton 43122? Dr Wagner? Listen, Dr Wagner, this is Judy ... Yes, Judy Parker. Listen, I'm in very bad trouble. Can you help? ... Trouble with Sam and the bank and the police. I haven't got time to explain ... Yes, OK. Please come to my house at once with your car. As fast as you can - it's really urgent 23 Carlton Road. Turn right at the station and it's the second street on your left. Please hurry! Oh, and come to the *back* door.

5

Dr Wagner and Judy are on their way to the airport in Dr Wagner's car. There is another car behind them, with a pretty blue lamp on top. Dr Wagner accelerates, and the police car disappears.

'But what's the problem, Judy?' asks Dr Wagner. 'I can't explain,' says Judy. 'It's too complicated.'

'I know what it is,' says Dr Wagner. 'It's that Sam. I don't like him at all. He's a very dishonest young man.'

'Sam is my boyfriend,' says Judy, 'and I love him. He has sensitive eyes and beautiful hands.'

Dr Wagner does not answer.

6

'Single to Rio de Janeiro, please,' says Judy. 'First class or tourist?'

'Oh, tourist, please.'

Judy checks in and goes through passport control to the departure gate. On the plane, she finds a seat by the window. A young man comes and sits down by her. Judy looks at him. He is tall and dark, about 25, and very well dressed. Judy is not interested in him.

He has dark brown eyes, a straight nose, a wide humorous mouth, and strong brown hands with long sensitive fingers. He is incredibly handsome. Judy looks out of the window.

7

'Excuse me. Would you like a drink?'

'Oh, er, yes. Thank you very much. A whisky, please.' The young man gave² Judy her drink and smiled at her. He had an incredibly attractive smile. He really looked very nice: calm, friendly and kind. 'Perhaps he's a doctor,' she thought³ - 'a surgeon, with those strong sensitive hands. Or perhaps an artist, or a musician.' Yes, he looked like an artist. She looked at him again and smiled.

'What time is it, please?' he asked.

Judy looked at her watch. 'Two thirty-five.'

'Thank you,' he said, and smiled at her. She smiled back at him. He smiled again. He took a gun out of his pocket, stood^s up, and walked to the front of the plane.

8

'Good afternoon. This is your hijacker speaking. We are now flying at 550 miles per hour at a height of 29,000 feet. In approximately one and a half hours we will be over the north of Scotland. I wish you a pleasant flight.'

Judy's head was going round and round. First Sam, then the police, and now the hijacker. Where would it all end? Life was really much too complicated. She drank her whisky. It didn't make any difference. She looked out of the window. The sky was full of big dark clouds. So was her head.

Some time later the plane started going down. The pilot's door opened, and the hijacker came out, still holding his gun. He walked up to her and smiled. 'You know,' he said, 'you really are extremely beautiful. Come and put on your parachute.' Judy fainted.

9

Judy opened her eyes. The sun was shining, and a cool wind was blowing on her face. She felt very light and happy. 'Where am I?' she said. Behind her, a man's voice said '100 feet above Loch Ness. Can you swim?' Judy fainted again.

When she opened her eyes, she was lying on the bank of the loch, with her head on her parachute. 'Allow me to introduce myself,' said the handsome young man. 'My name is Jasper MacDonald.' 'Why did you hijack the plane?' asked Judy. 'It's my birthday,' said Jasper. 'Now let's go to my castle and find some dry clothes.'

10

It didn't take long to get to Jasper's castle. It was an enormous building, about half a mile from Loch Ness, with tall towers, battlements and a moat, and at least 200 rooms. 'What a place!' said Judy. 'Well, it's not much, but it's home,' said Jasper. 'Let me show you to your room. And I'll see if I can find you some of my sister's clothes.' Judy's room was about ten minutes' walk from the main entrance, up a lot of stairs and along a lot of corridors. It was beautiful, decorated in light blue and lilac, with some wonderful pieces of antique furniture. There was a splendid view of the loch and the mountains. 'This is lovely!' said Judy. 'How many of you live here?' 'Just my sister and I,' said Jasper. 'And the ghost, of course. See you later.'

11

Judy had a bath, and then put on some of Jasper's sister's clothes. They fitted her perfectly. She looked at herself in the mirror, smiled, frowned, and went downstairs.

'Hello,' said Jasper. 'Did I tell you how beautiful you are?'

'Yes, you did,' said Judy.

'Fine,' said Jasper. 'Let me show you round the castle before tea.'

'But I don't want to stay for tea,' said Judy.

'This part of the castle was built in 1480,' said Jasper. 'I want to go to Rio,' said Judy.

'This is a portrait of my ancestor Donald MacDonald,' said Jasper.

'I want to see my boyfriend Sam,' said Judy. 'He was a friend of King James VI,' said Jasper. 'I love him,' said Judy.

'James VI?' said Jasper, interested.

'No, you fool,' said Judy. 'My boyfriend Sam.'

'Oh, Sam Watson,' said Jasper. 'You don't want to see him.'

'Yes, I do,' said Judy.

'No, you don't,' said Jasper. 'This is a portrait of my ancestor MacDonald MacDonald.'

'How do you know Sam?' said Judy.

'He was a friend of King Robert the Bruce,' said Jasper.

'Sam?' said Judy.

'No, you fool,' said Jasper. 'MacDonald. You don't want to see Sam. You want to stay here with me. I love you.'

12

Sam Watson was standing at the arrivals gate at Rio Airport, holding a bunch of flowers. He was worried. Judy's plane was three hours late and nobody knew why. Sam walked over to the bar and had a drink. He walked back to the arrivals gate. No news. He walked back to the bar and had another drink. Still no news ... Back to the bar ...

Two hours (and eight drinks) later, Judy's plane landed, and after another half hour the passengers started coming out, Sam smiled, and looked for Judy. After a time he stopped smiling. Finally, the last passenger came through. It wasn't Judy. Sam said a big bad word. What had happened? He went over to the information desk. 'My name's Sam Watson,' he said. 'Have you got any messages for me?' Yes,' said the stewardess. 'A telephone message from Scotland.' She handed him a paper. 'Mr Sam Watson, Rio Airport. Have a nice holiday. Don't come back. Love, Jasper MacDonald.' Sam said another big bad word, tore up the caper, and gave the flowers to the stewardess. 'What time's the next plane to London?'

Behind Sam, a tall beautiful girl was listening to his conversation. When she heard the word 'London', she smiled.

As the night plane took off, Sam closed his eyes. He loved travelling, but he was always a little afraid of flying. He couldn't really understand how the plane stayed up in the air. Also, he was worried about what would happen to him. Would there be detectives waiting for him at London Airport? It was crazy to leave Brazil. In Brazil there was sun, freedom and beautiful women. He could live happily for years with his £50,000. In Britain there was rain, trouble, policemen and a strong chance of prison. But he had to see Judy. Judy was different. Judy was special. Sam smiled and opened his eyes. Next to him there was sitting a tall, incredibly beautiful girl. 'Hello,' said Sam. 'My name's Sam.' 'I know,' said the beautiful girl. 'My name's Detective Sergeant Honeybone.' Sam closed his eyes again.

13

When Judy woke up the next morning the Sun was shining, the birds were singing, and everything was beautiful. Her room was lovely, and she felt fine. There was a knock on the door, and in walked the ghost, carrying a cup of tea. 'Did you sleep well?' he asked. 'Yes, beautifully,' said Judy. 'And thank you for a wonderful dinner last night.' The ghost blushed. 'Not at all,' he said. 'It was just a simple meal. I'm glad you enjoyed it.'

The evening before, after a magnificent dinner (cooked by the ghost), Judy and Jasper had talked far into the night - about life, love, art, death, music, books, travel, philosophy, religion, politics,

economics, astronomy, biochemistry, archaeology, motor-racing and many other subjects. Most of all, they had talked about themselves. And when they had said goodnight, Jasper had kissed her, very gently. She could still feel the touch of his lips. What a perfect evening! Judy smiled at the memory. She stopped smiling. She had to go to Rio to see Sam. Sam was her boyfriend. She loved him. The Sun went behind a cloud. The birds stopped singing. Judy started getting dressed as fast as she could.

14

When Sam woke up he felt terrible. He had a headache, and there was a horrible taste in his mouth. He looked out of the window. The sun was shining, and through a gap in the clouds he could see the sea. It was a long way down. Sam shivered and turned to look at Detective Sergeant Honeybone. She looked fresh and lovely - even more beautiful than the evening before. 'Good morning,' she said. 'Did you sleep well?' 'No,' said Sam. 'Excuse me.' He got up and walked forward to the toilets.

After a wash and a shave, Sam felt a little better. He brushed his hair, put his jacket back on, and looked at his tongue in the mirror. Not a pretty sight. Sam put his tongue back in, took out his gun, and looked at his watch. Time to move. He came out of the toilet, glanced round quickly, and then walked to the front of the plane. Opening the door of the cockpit, he stepped inside. 'This is a hijack,' he said. 'Take me to Loch Ness.' 'Oh God,' said the pilot. 'Not again. What's so special about Loch Ness?' 'Jasper MacDonald,' said Sam.'

15

Judy ran downstairs and into the dining room. No Jasper - only the ghost. 'Can I help you?' he asked politely. 'Would you like some breakfast?' 'Where's Jasper?' asked Judy. 'He's gone out,' said the ghost. 'Oh dear,' said Judy. 'Lend me a pen and paper, could you?'

Quickly she wrote a note to Jasper:

'Dear Jasper,

It was wonderful. But I have to go. I'm sorry. I wanted to say goodbye to you, but perhaps it is better like this. Thank you for a beautiful memory.

Judy.'

She said goodbye to the ghost, who looked sad, and walked out of the castle. Not far along the road there was a bus stop. If she could get to Inverness before lunch, she could catch the afternoon plane to London and buy some new clothes before catching the night flight to Rio. Tomorrow morning she could be in Sam's arms. How wonderful! Judy started crying.

At the bus stop, Judy read the timetable. Buses for Inverness ran every three hours, but she was lucky - there was one in twenty minutes. As she stood waiting, she looked out over the lake. A few hundred yards away there was a man fishing in a boat. She could hear him singing in the clear still air. He had a wonderful voice - a voice that Judy recognised - and he was singing an old Scottish love song. It was Jasper. Tears came into Judy's eyes, and she looked away from the boat, up into the peaceful sky. High above Loch Ness, a golden eagle was flying in circles. There were pretty little clouds looking like splashes of white paint against the deep blue. And two parachutes.

16

Sam and Detective Sergeant Honeybone hit the water together. Sam went under and came up. 'Help!' he shouted, going under again. 'I can't swim!' he shouted, as he came up again and went under for the third time. Sam's life passed in front of his eyes as he went down, down, down into the green water. His

childhood in London. Visiting his mother and father in prison. His first girlfriend. His first bank robbery. Judy. Judy. He would never see her again.

'Don't worry, you lovely man,' called Detective Sergeant Honeybone. 'I'm an Olympic 400-metre gold medallist.' She swam over to him with beautiful strong strokes, caught him under the arms as he came up again, and started pulling him towards the boat.

'Hello, Isabel,' said Jasper as they pulled Sam out of the water. 'What are you doing here? And why have you got Sam with you? He's the last person I want to see.'

'It's a long story,' said Detective Sergeant Honeybone. 'I'll tell you later. Wait while I give Sam the kiss of life.' 'I don't need the kiss of life,' said Sam. 'Oh yes you do,' said Detective Sergeant Honeybone.

'All right,' said Jasper. 'I suppose we'd better go back to the castle and find you some dry clothes. Pity. I was hoping for a quiet morning's fishing. He rowed the boat over to the bank of the loch and they got out. Detective Sergeant Honeybone picked up Sam in her beautiful strong arms and they started walking down the road towards the castle. As they passed the bus stop, Jasper walked over to Judy, who was staring up at the sky. 'Good morning, you beautiful creature,' he said. 'Going shopping? Don't forget lunch is at 12.30.' Judy turned her back, tears streaming down her face. 'Don't talk to me about lunch,' she said. 'I'm going to Rio to see Sam.' 'But Sam's here,' said Jasper. 'Don't try to talk me out of it,' said Judy. 'I've made up my mind, and I ... what did you say?' She turned round and looked across the road. There was Detective Sergeant Honeybone, standing with a soft smile on her lips looking down at Sam, who was lying in her arms with his eyes closed.

17

JUDY: Who is that woman?

JASPER: May I introduce my sister Isabel? Isabel, this is Judy.

SAM: If you're Jasper's sister, why is your name Honeybone?

ISABEL: It's a long story. Give me a kiss, Sam.

JUDY: Put that man down at once.

JASPER: Ladies, . . .

ISABEL: Who is that woman, and why is she wearing my sweater?

JUDY: Sam, get down.

ISABEL: He's not feeling very strong.

JUDY: That's all right. I'm a medical student. I'll look after him.

ISABEL: Oh, no. You're not playing doctors with my Sam.

JASPER: Ladies....

JUDY: He's not your Sam. He's my Sam.

ISABEL: Take my sweater off at once.

JASPER: Ladies, please.

JUDY & ISABEL: Shut Up.

JUDY: Sam, protect me from this mad woman.

ISABEL: It's all right, Sam. Don't pay any attention to her. I'll look after you.

JASPER: Sam, where are you going?

JUDY & ISABEL: Sam, come back!

(Splash!)

18

North-east Highlands Police Control, calling all cars. Calling all cars. The hijackers of the Boeing 707 from Rio are believed to be in the Loch Ness area after leaving the plane by parachute about twenty minutes ago. Proceed at once to the vicinity of Castle Clandonald and begin searching.

Description as follows:

Man, British, medium height, dark hair, small moustache, small brown eyes, wearing a blue suit and black shoes. He is believed to be Sam Watson, who is wanted in connection with a series of bank robberies. He is carrying a gun, and may be dangerous. Woman, nationality unknown, tall, blonde, blue eyes, attractive, athletic build, wearing dark clothes and shoes. Nothing is known about her identity. Approach these people with caution. Repeat, approach with caution.'

19

When Jock McHaverty was a little boy, he always wanted to be a bus driver. His father hoped he would go into the family business, and his mother would have liked him to be a doctor. But Jock just wasn't interested. He loved buses - all kinds of buses. He loved the way they looked, the smell of the diesel fuel, and most of all, the wonderful noise they made. When he was fourteen, he went on his first real holiday - a bus trip to the south of England and back. And when he left school two years later, he went straight into the Highland Bus Company.

Now Jock was one of the Company's most experienced drivers, working on the Fort William - Inverness route. This morning was fairly typical: he had eight passengers on board, and would probably pick up one or two more on the way. They were about twenty minutes late (Jock had stopped for a cup of tea and a chat at Strathnahuilish Post Office), but it didn't matter. 'Late' was not a word of any great importance in the Scottish Highlands. Jock leaned forward a little in his seat and smiled. It was a lovely day. The Sun was shining on the loch, and the bus was running beautifully. Jock changed gear as they started up the long hill towards Clandonald Castle.

20

In her black Porsche, Dr Wagner was getting a little impatient. She was in a hurry to get to her hotel in Inverness and have a bath and a rest, after driving overnight from London. But for the last fifteen miles she had been stuck behind a bus that was driving very slowly in the middle of the road, and it seemed impossible to get past. 'Calm down, Mary,' she said to herself. 'You've got plenty of time.'

She started thinking about the holiday that was just starting. Every year, she drove up to the Scottish Highlands and spent two weeks looking for the Loch Ness Monster. Dr Wagner was a member of the West London Society for the Investigation of Strange and Unexplained Phenomena, and she was very interested in monsters, ghosts, flying saucers and things of that kind. She had never yet seen anything in Loch Ness, but she always had a wonderful holiday and went back home feeling happy

and relaxed. She had a feeling about this year, though. This year was going to be special. Somehow, she just knew.

A sudden noise brought her out of her dreams. She looked in the mirror. Behind her, the road was full of police cars, with lights flashing and sirens howling. Dr Wagner frowned. She didn't like police cars. 'It's no use making all that noise,' she said. 'You'll never get past the bus.'

21

Down at the bottom of Loch Ness, things were very calm. The Monster scratched her ear with the third leg on the right and decided that it was time to do something. She didn't usually go up to the surface during the day because the light hurt her eyes, but she was getting bored out of her mind sitting down at the bottom of the loch with nothing to do except talk to the fish. She scratched her ear again, yawned, stretched, and started swimming slowly up towards the light.

Five minutes later, the Monster reached the surface, stuck her head and fifteen metres of neck out of the water, and looked around. She closed her eyes and opened them again. It was a little difficult to understand what was happening. Scotland was generally a fairly quiet place, but today a lot of things seemed to be going on.

On the bank of the loch, two women were fighting. A man was trying to stop them; another man was trying to learn to swim. The road was full of cars with pretty blue lights on top, coming from all directions. A helicopter landed on the bank of the loch and some soldiers got out and lay down. There was a bus driving along very slowly with the driver looking out of the window. The bus driver caught sight of the Monster and drove into the loch. The two women stopped fighting and stood with their mouths open. All the police cars crashed into each other. A sports car stopped and a woman got out and started taking photographs.

It was all too much. The Monster closed her eyes and went back down to the bottom of the loch.

22

'Hello, Judy,' said Dr Wagner. 'What are you doing here? I thought you were in Rio.' 'It's a long story,' said Judy. 'I'll tell you later.' 'Did you see the Monster?' said Dr Wagner. 'Wasn't she just *wonderful*? I got hundreds of photos.'

'I'm sorry to interrupt,' said Jasper, 'but I think this is a very good time to go on holiday. Isabel, go and get Sam out of the water and follow us up to the castle. Judy, come with me. I hope the ghost remembered to fill the plane up with petrol.' 'Ghost?' said Dr Wagner. 'You have a ghost in your castle? A ghost?' 'Come along with us and you can meet him,' said Judy. 'But hurry.'

Twenty seconds later, they drove in through the front gate of the castle in Dr Wagner's Porsche, and a minute or so after that Isabel ran up carrying Sam over her shoulder. The ghost closed the gate and led the way to the back of the castle. There, standing on the grass, shining in the sun, was a powerful-looking six-seater aeroplane. 'Get in,' said Jasper. 'We haven't got a moment to lose.' 'Can I come too?' asked Dr Wagner. 'I must talk to that beautiful ghost.' 'Of course,' said Jasper, 'but get in fast, or you'll be talking to our wonderful police. Fasten seat-belts, everybody. Take-off in fifteen seconds.' 'Where are we going?' asked Judy. 'Rio,' said Jasper. 'That's where you wanted to go, isn't it?' 'Sounds good to me,' said Sam. 'Jasper,' said Judy, 'I have been a blind, blind fool. I love you.'

23

As the plane flew peacefully south-west across the Atlantic, Judy put her head on Jasper's shoulder and closed her eyes. 'I'm so glad I'm in love with you instead of Sam,' she said. 'It's much nicer. I'm sure we're going to be very happy together. Do you think the others will be all right?' 'I think so,' said Jasper, and kissed her.

Judy listened to the fragments of conversation that came from the seats behind. 'Isabel, you are my favourite detective. Will you teach me to swim?' 'Have some more champagne, ghost.' 'Yes, please. Call me MacDonald.' 'You've got beautiful eyes, Sam.' 'Can ghosts get married?'

'Sounds all right,' said Judy. 'Tell me, are you really terribly rich? How did you get your money? What do you do, actually? How did you get to know Sam? Why did you really hijack that plane?'

'I'll tell you later,' said Jasper. 'It's a long story.'

The End