



Learn English Through Stories.

B Series

B30

**Adapted and modified by  
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## **Contents**

- 1. Goodbye, Mr Hollywood.  
Chapters: 1 and 2.**
- 2. Conjunctions 3.**
- 3. Picture Dictionary.**

## Chapter One: Mystery girl

It all began on a beautiful spring morning in a village called Whistler, in Canada - a pretty little village in the mountains of British Columbia.

There was a cafe in the village, with tables outside, and at one of these tables sat a young man. He finished his breakfast, drank his coffee, looked up into the blue sky, and felt the warm sun on his face. Nick Lortz was a happy man.

The waiter came up to his table. 'More coffee?' he asked.

'Yeah. Great,' said Nick. He gave the waiter his coffee cup.

The waiter looked at the camera on the table. 'On vacation?' he said. 'Where are you from?'

'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?'

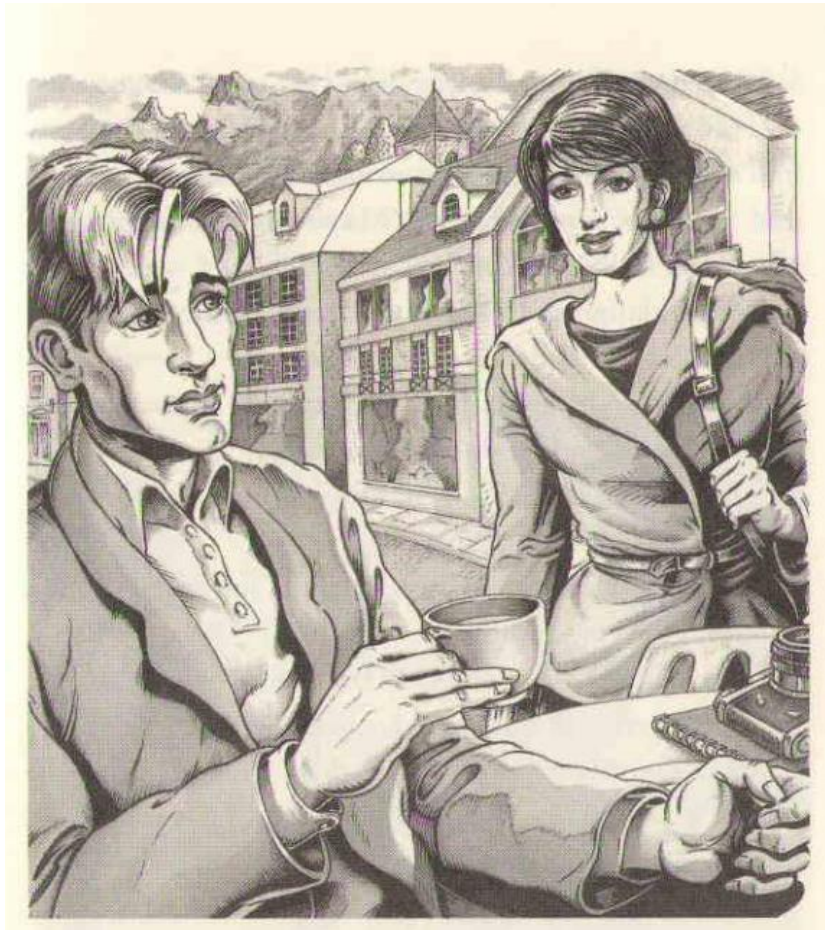
Nick turned his head and looked. 'No, I don't.'

'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 cafe.

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 Montreal. 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.

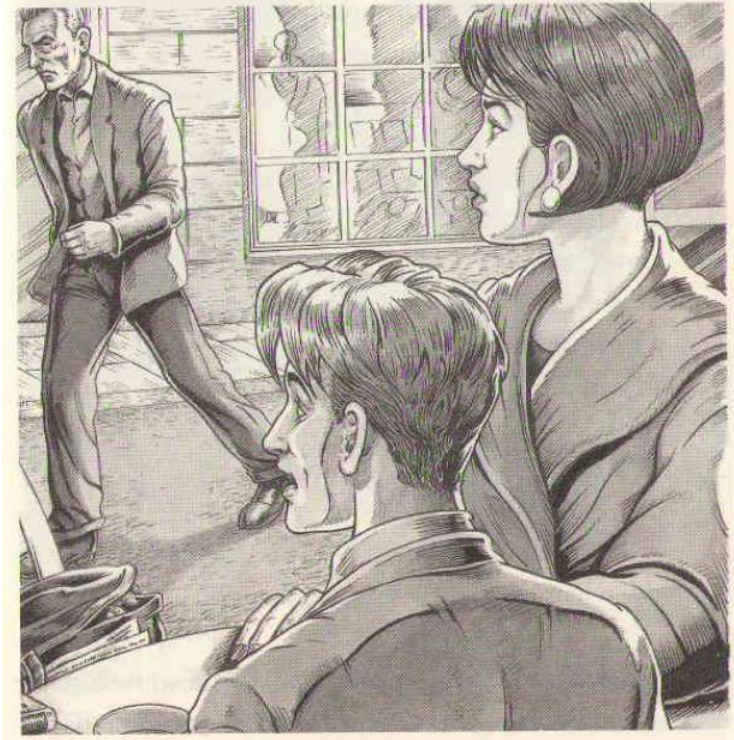
'When are you going?' she asked.

'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?'



*'Are you waiting for someone?' Asked Nick.*

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

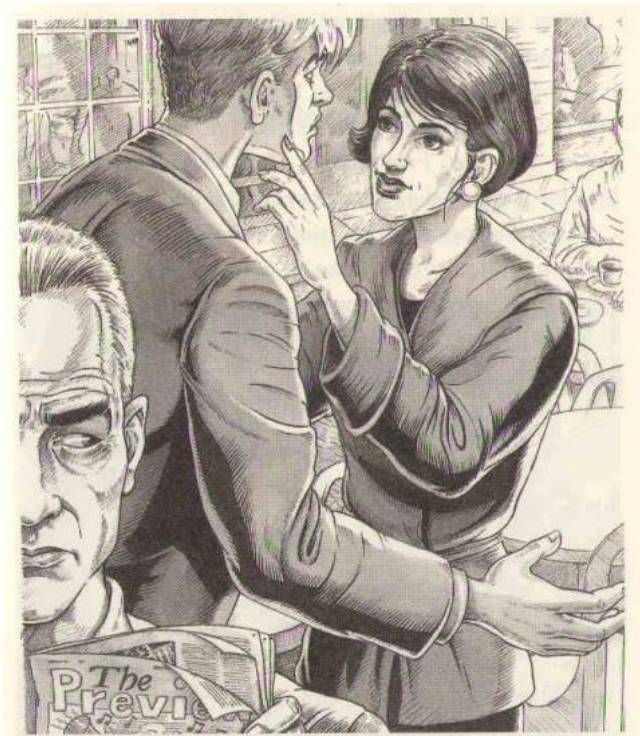
But the girl suddenly took his face between her hands, and kissed him on the mouth. 'Drive carefully, Mr Hollywood. Goodbye,' she said, with a big, beautiful smile. Then she turned and walked quickly away.



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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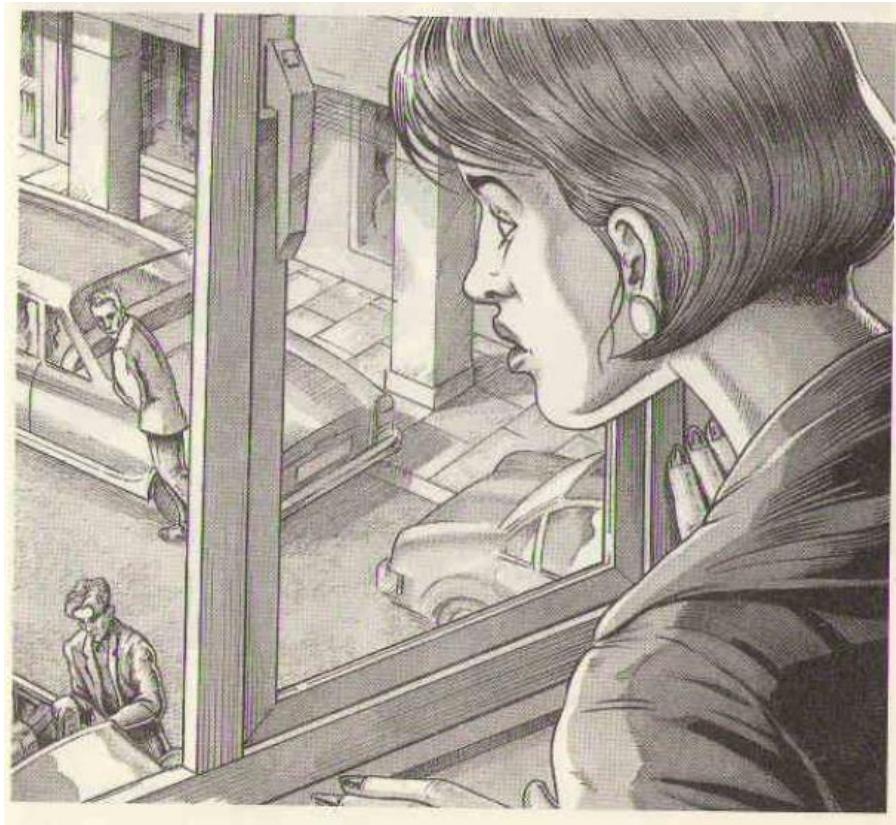
The man with white hair watched Nick and waited. After four or five minutes, Nick finished his coffee, took his books and his camera, and left the cafe. His car was just outside the girl's hotel, and he walked slowly along the street to it.



*'Drive carefully, Mr. Hollywood'*

The man with white hair waited a second, then quickly followed Nick.  
From a window high up in the hotel, the girl looked down into the road. She saw Nick, and the man with white hair about fifty yards behind him. Nick got into his car, and the man with white hair walked quickly to a red car across the street. Five seconds later Nick drove away in his blue car, and the red car began to follow him.

When the girl saw this, she smiled, then went to put some things in her travel bag.



*The man with white hair walked quickly to a red car across the street.*



## Chapter Two: A hand in the back

That evening, in his hotel room in Vancouver, Nick could not stop thinking about the girl in the Whistler cafe. Why did she come and sit with him? She didn't know him, and that story about a party in Toronto wasn't true. And she was worried about something. But what?

And that kiss! It was nice, of course, but why did she do it? 'Maybe she liked my face,' Nick thought. 'Or my brown eyes. But I'm not going to see her again, so it doesn't matter. Forget it.'

He put some money in his pocket and went downstairs to the hotel restaurant. But there were no free tables, so he walked down to Gastown and found a restaurant there.

After dinner, he went for a walk. Vancouver was a friendly city, and Nick liked walking through Gastown and Chinatown, looking in the shops and watching the people. It was nearly dark now, and it was a busy time of the evening. There were a lot of cars, and a lot of people.

After a time, Nick began to walk back to his hotel. He came to a busy street, and waited, with a small crowd of people, to go across. A tall woman in a blue dress stood next to him. She turned and smiled at him.

'It's the first warm evening of spring,' she said. 'It's nice to be out, after the long cold winter.'

'Yeah,' said Nick. 'It's great. It's—'

Suddenly, there was a hand in his back — and the hand pushed Nick into the road. Nick fell on his face, in front of a big green car.

People screamed.

But the green car stopped, only inches from Nick's head. The woman in the blue dress ran into the road and pulled Nick to his feet.

'Are you OK? What happened?' she said.



*Nick fell on his face, in front of a big green car.*

The driver of the green car shouted angrily at Nick, but Nick did not hear him. 'Somebody pushed me,' he said to the woman. 'I didn't fall — somebody pushed me!'

'Pushed you?' said the woman. 'Who? I didn't see anybody.'

Nick looked at the faces of the people near him, but he didn't know them.

Then he saw a man's back. The man was tall and thin, and had very short white hair. He walked quickly away down the street, and did not look back.

'Hey, you!' Nick shouted. 'Wait!'

But the man did not stop, and he was soon lost in the crowds.

'Did *he* push you?' asked the woman in the blue dress.

'I ... I don't know,' Nick said. 'Do you know him?' she asked.

'I don't know his name,' Nick said. 'But I know that short white hair. Now where did I see it before?'

The woman began to move away. 'I must get home,' she said. 'Are you OK now?'

'Yeah, I'm OK,' Nick said. 'And thanks. Thanks for your help.'

'That's OK.' The woman smiled. 'Be careful now!'

Back in his hotel, Nick sat on his bed and thought. 'It was an accident. Nobody pushed me, it was an accident. Nobody wants to kill me. And there are hundreds of men in Vancouver with white hair.'

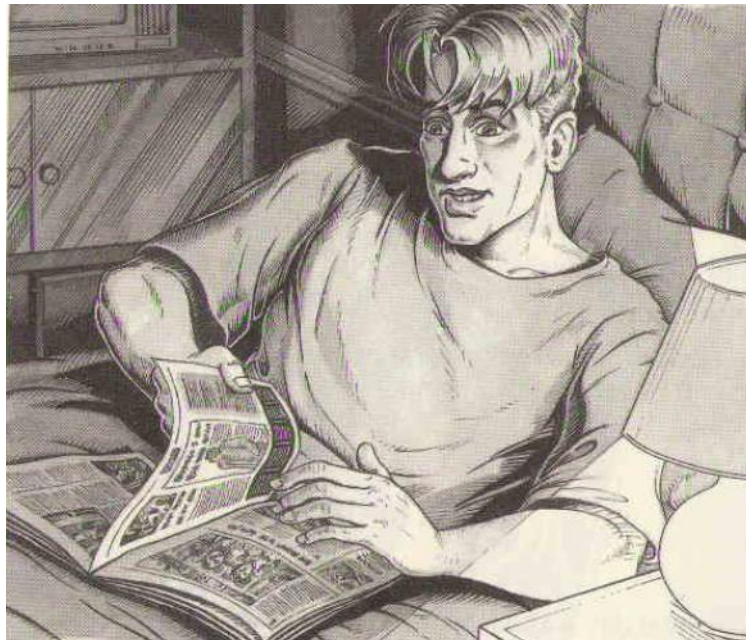
It was one o'clock in the morning, but Nick couldn't sleep. He listened to the cars in the road, and he looked at the night sky through his hotel room window.

Then he sat at the table and tried to write some more of his book about mountains, but he couldn't think about his work. He got back into bed.

There were four or five magazines in the hotel room. They were not very interesting, but Nick sat in bed and opened one . . . *and saw a photo of 'Mystery Girl'!*

He looked at the picture very carefully. But, yes, it was her! Jan, the girl from the Whistler cafe.

She was next to a man of about fifty or fifty-five, and they were in the garden of a big, expensive house. They smiled at the camera, and they looked very happy.



Nick sat in bed and opened one . . . *and saw a photo of 'Mystery Girl'!*

*Canadian millionaire, Howard Hutson, and his daughter, Meg, it said under the picture, at their home in Toronto. Meg Hutson! Not Jan. Not Mystery Girl.*

Meg Hutson, the daughter of a millionaire! Nick read it again.

'Why did she come and sit with *me* in the cafe at Whistler?' he thought. 'Millionaires' daughters don't sit with strangers in cafes, and then give them a big kiss when they leave! Why did she do it? What did she want?'

He thought back to the cafe in Whistler, and the girl next to him at the table. Then he remembered something. He remembered a man at a table near them in the cafe. A tall thin man, about sixty years old. A man with very short white hair.

Nick didn't sleep much that night.

## 2. Conjunctions 3

### Other Words for **but**:

There are other words for **but** that also join two sentences.

1. Grandpa is old but very fit.

Although Grandpa is old, he's very fit.

Grandpa is very fit despite his old age.

2. The weather was sunny but cold.

Even though the weather was sunny, it was cold.

It was cold despite the sunny weather.

3. The bus is slower than the train but it's cheaper.

While the bus is slower than the train, it's cheaper.

The bus is slower than the train, it's cheaper though.



4. This computer is very old but reliable.

Though this computer is very old, it is very reliable.

This computer is very reliable despite being very old.

### 3. Picture Dictionary Page

#### Jobs

 <p>dentist</p>	 <p>waiter</p>	 <p>firefighter</p>	
 <p> garbage collector  dustman</p>	 <p>doctor</p>	 <p>actor</p>	 <p>baker</p>
 <p>pilot</p>	 <p>chef</p>	 <p> veterinarian  vet</p>	 <p>window cleaner</p>