

Annette Keen



*Carnival*

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Jake arrives at Euston station in London. It is a holiday weekend and it is his first time away from Manchester. Jake is eighteen years old and he lives with his family. Now he is in London. He is very happy. He stops and looks at his map.

'I can go to the Notting Hill Carnival and I can see some interesting places from the bus too,' he thinks.

Jake is sitting on a red London bus behind a big family. The children are standing at the windows. They are looking for famous places.

'Look! There's Madame Tussaud's! Can we go there?'

'Not today,' their mother answers. 'We're going to the carnival.'

'They're going to Notting Hill too,' Jake thinks.

It is a hot afternoon and Jake is sitting on a bench in Notting Hill. Suddenly, he sees some people in costumes. They have balloons and drums in their hands.

'Does the carnival start here?' Jake asks Mel, a girl in a green dress.

'Yes, near here. Look at the floats!' she says. 'Listen to the music! The procession is starting.'

Suddenly, a tall girl runs to the first float. Her costume is yellow and red and she has feathers in her hair. The young men on the float shout to her.

'Quickly, Maria! You're late!'

'Sorry - a little problem with my job,' she says. 'But it's OK now.'

The band moves slowly down the street.

Jake looks at the beautiful tall girl in her carnival costume. Their eyes meet and she smiles at him. Suddenly, he knows. It's love!

Jake's new friends are standing and waiting for him. But he walks away from them. He can only see Maria. Mel talks to Jake but he doesn't hear her. She looks at Maria and she understands.

The carnival procession moves down the street. On the floats people are dancing to the music. Some people in the street are dancing too. There is a lot of music, noise and colour.

Lake is running but there are crowds of people near him. He can't stay with Maria's float. How can he meet this beautiful girl? Who is she?

Maria looks down and sees Jake again. He has a friendly face and she likes him too.

'I'm Jake. What's your name?' he shouts.

'Hi, Jake! I'm Maria,' she answers.

'Can I telephone you? What's your number?'

She gives a big smile. But Jake ain't hear her! The band is playing and people are shouting.

The procession goes near a street cafe. People are drinking coffee at tables on the street. A tourist is standing on a chair. He is making a film of the carnival. His wife is watching him.

Jake sees a camera on the table. He wants a photograph of Maria. He takes the camera and runs quickly after the float. 'Maria! Maria! I want a photo! Smile, please!'

The procession is moving slowly. There are crowds of people in the street and Jake can't see Maria now.

'I can run down a quiet street and find her float,' he thinks. He tries the first street. Suddenly, he hears the music from the band. He is near the procession now.

He sees Maria's float and shouts, 'Maria! I'm here!'

She sees him and she waves.

The tourist finds a policeman.

'A young man in a red T-shirt - he has my camera!' he says. 'Yes, I understand. Can you see him now?'

'It's very difficult in this crowd. But wait... yes, I can see him! There he is!'

Jake is standing on a bench.

'Look! That's him and that's my camera!'

Jake puts his photograph of Maria in his pocket. He is happy now. The policeman and the tourist run to him. 'Come down, young man,' the policeman says. 'Is that your camera?'

'No, it's my camera,' the man says.

Jake's face is red. Now he has a problem.

'Sorry, I only want one photo. Here's your camera.'

'I'm very sorry,' Jake says. 'I never do this.'

Jake thinks of his mother and he is very unhappy. The tourists think of their son and suddenly they are unhappy too.

'We have our camera now,' they say. 'He isn't a bad boy. Please, can he go?'

'No, I can't do that,' the policeman says.

Jake is standing in front of a police sergeant.

'Now, in your pockets you have... a map, a pen, 5.73 pounds a train ticket. Is that all?'

'Let's see this important photo,' the first policeman says. Jake takes the photo from his back pocket and gives it to the sergeant. The sergeant looks at the photograph for a long time. He is surprised.

'Where's Policewoman Day?' the sergeant asks.

'She's at the doctor's,' a policewoman says.

'No, she's here again now,' a policeman says. 'Do you want her?'

'Yes. Send her in. We have a problem.'

The policeman walks to the door and says, 'Please come in, Policewoman Day.'

The policemen look at the photo and they smile. Why? Jake doesn't understand.

The door opens and Policewoman Day comes in. She looks at Jake. He looks at her. They are very surprised. 'It's you!' they say at the same time.

'Look at this photo, Maria,' the sergeant says. 'Here you are at the doctor's - or perhaps the carnival?'

- THE END -

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