



PENGUIN READERS



The Big Bag Mistake

John Escott



Gisela is going home to Rio de Janeiro after a month's vacation in London. She lives in an apartment in Rio with two friends.

Her airplane leaves at five o'clock. It is one o'clock now. Gisela puts her clothes and a manuscript into a travel bag. This manuscript is very important to her. She is writing her first book.



Ricardo is a student. He lives in Rio de Janeiro. After two months in England, he is going home. He finds his seat on the airplane. A pretty girl is sitting in the seat near him.

"Hi!" Ricardo says to the girl. He smiles at her. Gisela looks up, but she doesn't smile.

"Hello," she says, and she looks down at her book again.



Suddenly, Ricardo's bag falls on the girl. It knocks the book from her hands.

"Oh!" Gisela says.

"Sorry!" Ricardo says. "I'm sorry!" He quickly gets her book from the floor and looks at it. "Interesting," he says. "Here you are."

"Thank you," she says. She is annoyed.



"My name's Ricardo," Ricardo says.

Gisela looks up at him.

"Is it?" she says. Then she looks at her book again.

"What's your name?" he asks.

Gisela doesn't look up from her book this time.

"Gisela," she says.

"That's a pretty name," Ricardo says.



Ricardo is talking about his time in England.

"I like London," he says. "I like the noise, the lights, the people, the red buses. Do you like London, Gisela? Do you like England?"

Gisela puts down her book and sighs.

"Yes," she says. "I like London. I like England. And I like *quiet* people!"



Later, there is a movie. Ricardo is watching the movie, but after a time he sleeps. Very slowly, his head falls onto Gisela's shoulder.

Gisela looks at Ricardo and sighs.

"I don't *want* his head on my shoulder," she thinks. "But he is *quiet* now." She thinks about her manuscript. "I can finish the story in Rio," she thinks.



Many hours later, the airplane arrives at Rio de Janeiro airport. Gisela and Ricardo go into the building and wait for their bags.

Gisela's bag is blue. Suddenly, she sees a blue travel bag.

"Here it is!" she thinks. "Good. Now I can go—and Ricardo can't follow me."

She quickly takes the bag and leaves the airport.

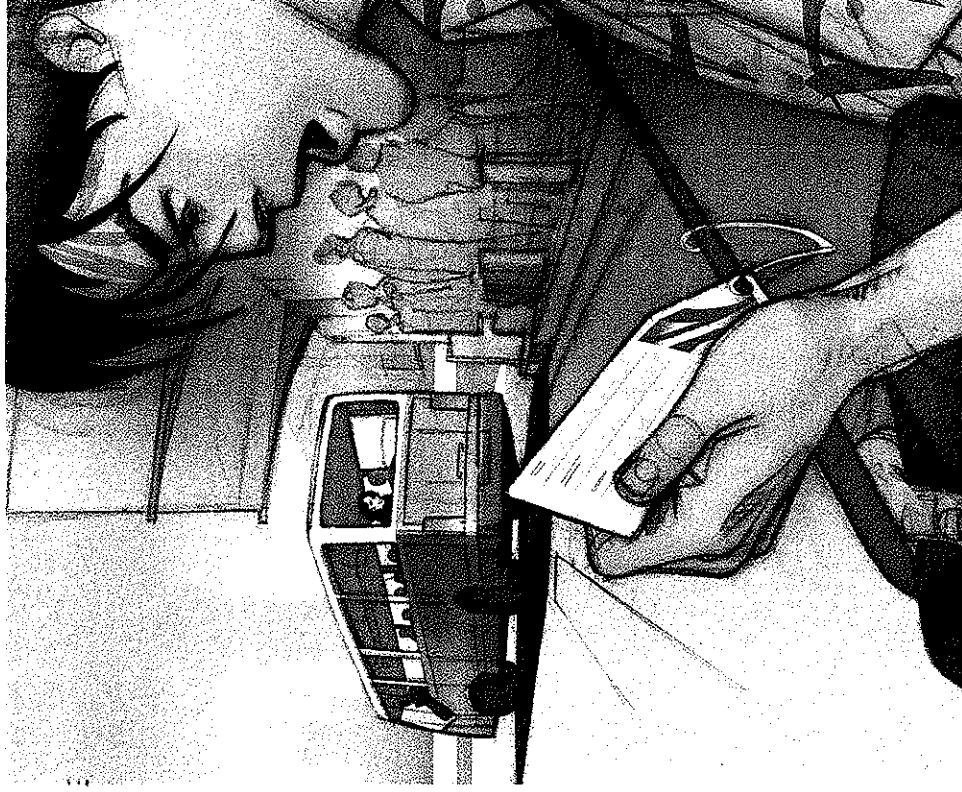


Ricardo watches Gisela.

“Wait for me, Gisela!” he thinks. But he doesn’t have his bag. He can’t leave the airport.

Then, suddenly, he sees a blue travel bag.

“That’s my bag!” he thinks. “Maybe I can catch Gisela!” He quickly takes the blue bag and runs from the airport into the street.



And there is Gisela, on a bus!

“Wait!” Ricardo calls.

He runs after the bus, but the bus doesn’t stop for him.

Gisela sees Ricardo from the window of the bus, and she smiles.

But now Ricardo is looking down at the blue bag.

“Something’s wrong,” he thinks.



The bus is very hot and Gisela's eyes close. She sleeps after the long journey from London.

A man on the bus is looking at the blue travel bag.

"Maybe there's money in that bag, or some expensive clothes," he thinks.

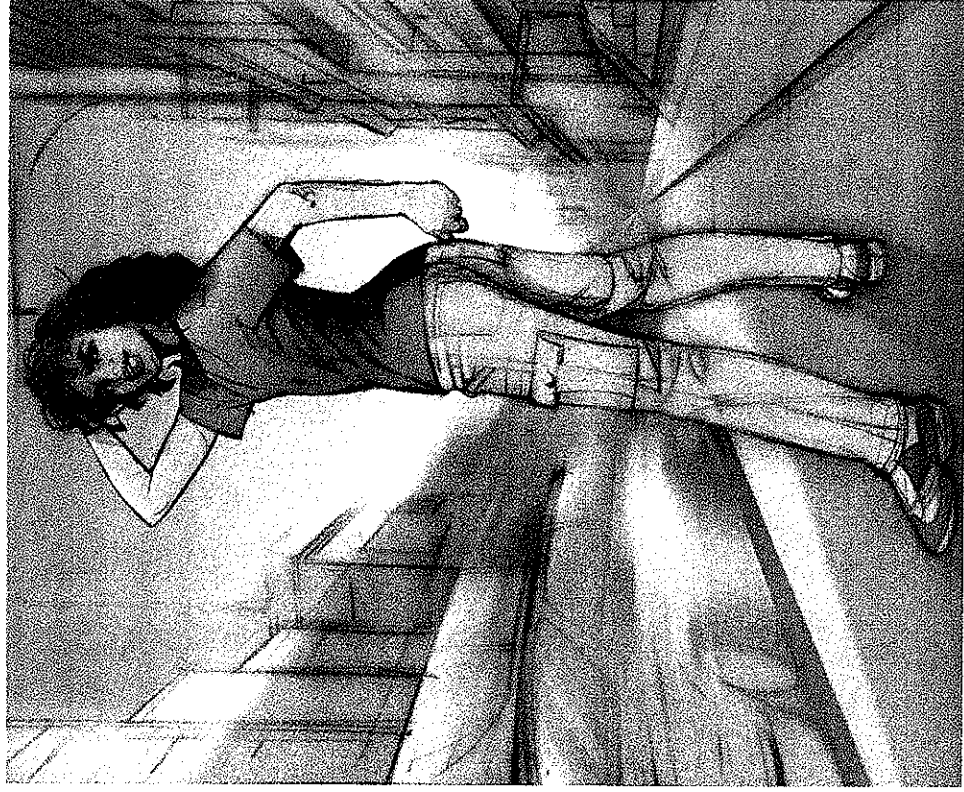
The bus is stopping now. Quickly, the man takes the bag and runs.



The bus stops and Gisela opens her eyes. Then the bus moves again and she sees the man. He is running down the street with the blue bag.

"Stop! Stop the bus!" Gisela says. "That man has my bag!"

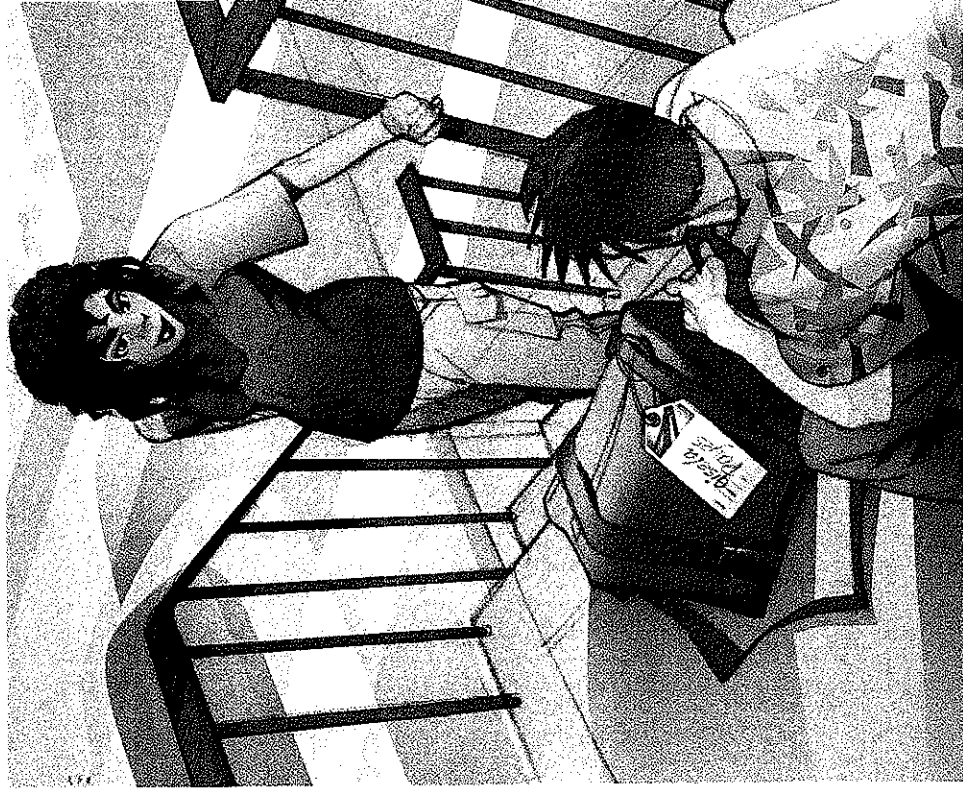
The bus stops again and Gisela runs after the man. But where is he?



Gisela runs up and down the streets of Rio, but she can't see the thief. She is angry and unhappy.

"My manuscript!" she thinks. "It's in that bag! Months and months of work! What can I do now? I can't start again."

Then, slowly, Gisela walks home to her apartment building.

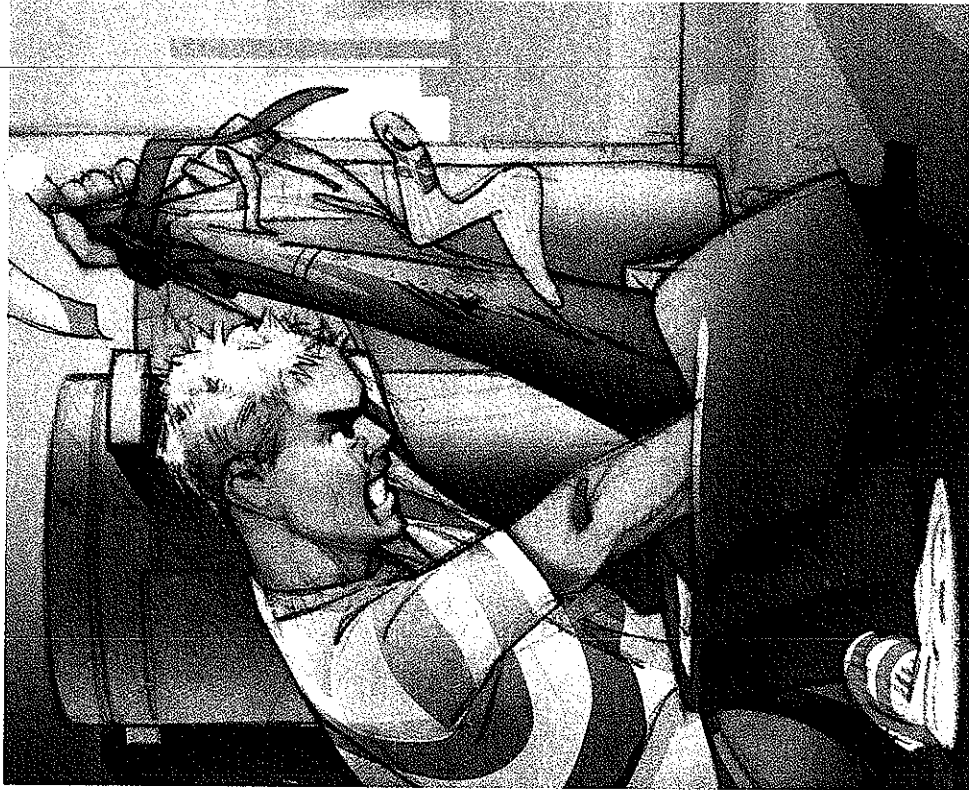


Ricardo is waiting for her at the door!

"What do *you* want, Ricardo?" Gisela says. "Oh! Is that my bag?"

Ricardo smiles. "*I* have your bag and *you* have—" He stops. "Where is it? Where's my bag?"

"*Your* bag?" Gisela says. "Oh! I'm sorry. A thief has your bag!"



The thief is looking at the things in Ricardo's bag. He doesn't understand. They aren't the clothes of a pretty young woman.

"What's this?" he thinks. "Dirty shirts! Dirty old jeans!"

He looks for some money or an expensive dress, but he doesn't find them.

He leaves the clothes in the street and walks away.



"I have my manuscript!" Gisela says. "Thank you."

Ricardo laughs. "And the thief can have my old shirts and jeans!" he says. "A big mistake!"

She smiles at him. "A lucky mistake for me," she says. "But how—?"

"How do I know your address?" Ricardo says. "It's on the label. You read books, Gisela. I read *labels*!"

WORD LIST with example sentences

annoyed (adj) I am not angry, but I am *annoyed*.
clothes (n pl) They are buying new *clothes*. The children don't have coats for the winter.
dirty (adj) Please wash your *dirty* hands!
follow (v) We are going in our car. You can *follow* us in your car.
hour (n) It is an *hour* on the bus from my home to my office.
journey (n) Take the car. The *journey* is very long on the train.
knock (v) He often *knocks* things onto the floor.
label (n) This is my bag. My name and address are on the *label*.
laugh (v) Why are you *laughing*? I like this hat.
leave (v) I am *leaving* work now and I am going home.
lucky (adj) They live in that beautiful house. They are very *lucky*.
manuscript (n) This is the *manuscript* of my father's new book.
mistake (n) Oh, do I have your coat? Sorry about the *mistake*.
pretty (adj) She is a *pretty* child, but not very smart.
seat (n) Excuse me! 20C is my *seat*.
shoulder (n) The boy can't see the game. Put him on your *shoulders*.
sigh (v) Are you *sighing*? The job is not difficult!
something (pron) There is *something* on the floor. What is it?
travel (n) She likes *travel* and she visits interesting places.
thief (n) *Thieves* are taking bags from trains at night.