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İstiklal Cad. 386/1 Tünel
34430 Beyoğlu - İstanbul
Tel.: [+90 212] 293 08 66 • 293 03 67 • 245 17 90
Fax: [+90 212] 251 49 40
e-mail: infobest@bestkitap.com
website: www.bestkitap.com

Illustrated by Sema Bencem Cihan

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Acknowledgement

This story is based on an original idea by Mahir Küfteoğlu ('Blue Bird').

It's now a week since Brad, Jim and I moved into our new apartment in Istanbul. We all like living in this city - it's an exciting place. We're happy with the way things are going at the university, too. We've made friends with quite a lot of the students there and we also get on well with the teachers, which is nice.

We're good friends with Serdar now. We see him quite often. A few days ago we talked about that interesting old house in the street behind Mary's apartment. We decided to go and have a look at it.

I see Serdar's girlfriend Ebru nearly every day at the university. She's given us a lot of help.

We've all made a lot of new friends. When we can, we go on short trips to see more of the city.

The only thing that's worrying me is, I haven't seen my Wisdom Bird for the last two days.



This morning I got up early and went into Brad's room.

"Good morning, Brad!"

"Morning, Skyhawk!"

"Come on, let's have breakfast and then go and have a look at that old house behind Mary's apartment."

"Good idea. Is Jim awake yet?"

"Yeah, he's been awake for hours. In fact, I don't think he went to sleep at all last night."

"OK, then. You phone Serdar while I go to the bathroom."

"Right. I'll call him now."

So I phoned Serdar and asked him to come round to our apartment.

"Was that Serdar you were talking to?" asked Jim.

"That's right. He's ready. He'll be here in a minute."

"Come on, then. Let's start breakfast."

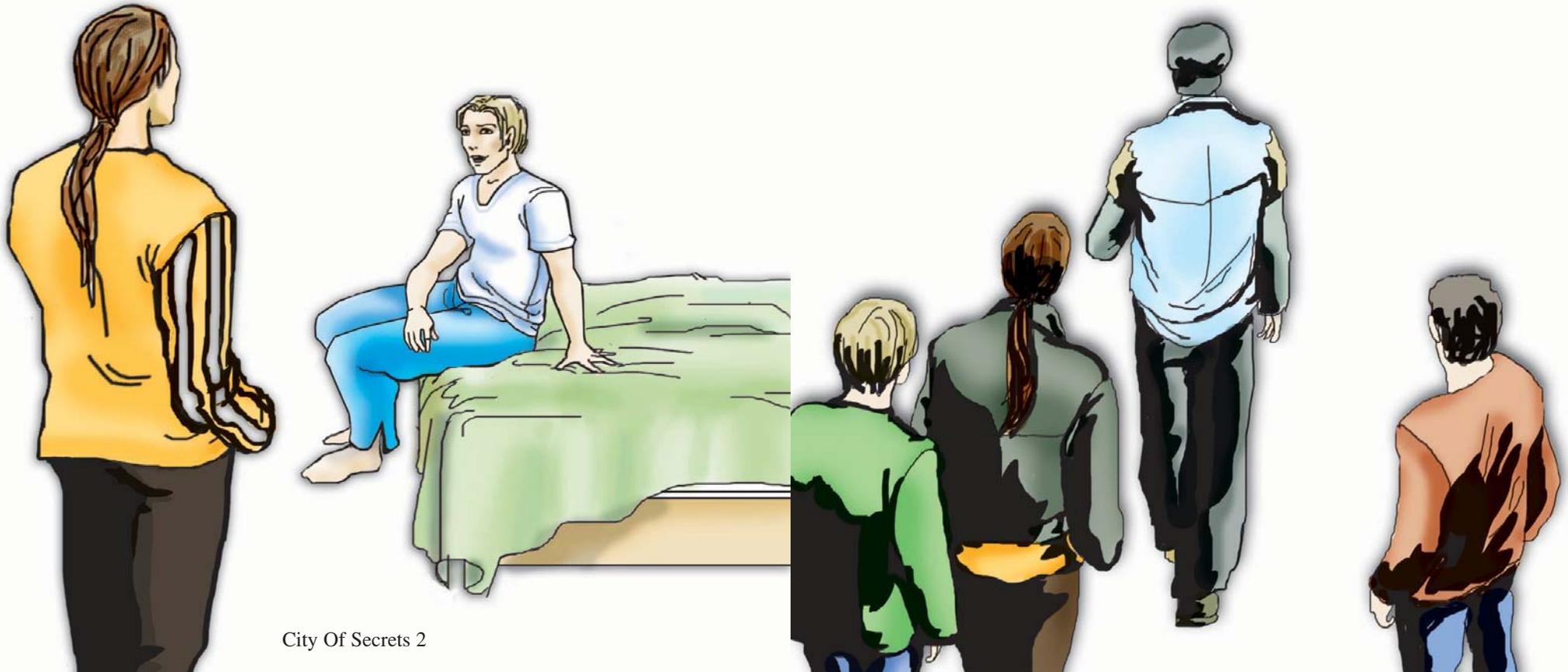
Just as we were finishing breakfast, the doorbell rang. It was Serdar.

"Hi! Ready for a bit of exploring?"

"Right on!"

"Sure are!"

"So - we're going to see that old place at last," said Brad. "Globetrotters, quick march!"





A couple of minutes later, we were in the street behind Mary's apartment. We went through the front gate of the big old mansion and walked up to the front door.

"Don't you know anything at all about this place?" Jim asked Serdar.

"All I know is that no-one has lived in it for a long time. No-one wants to go inside. People say it's haunted," Serdar replied.

"Look - the door's stuck. We can't get in this way," said Jim.

"Don't worry. There's another door at the back. It's in even worse shape than this one," said Serdar.

"OK - we'll try the back door, in that case," said Jim. We walked round to the back of the house.

"This was probably the kitchen door," said Serdar.

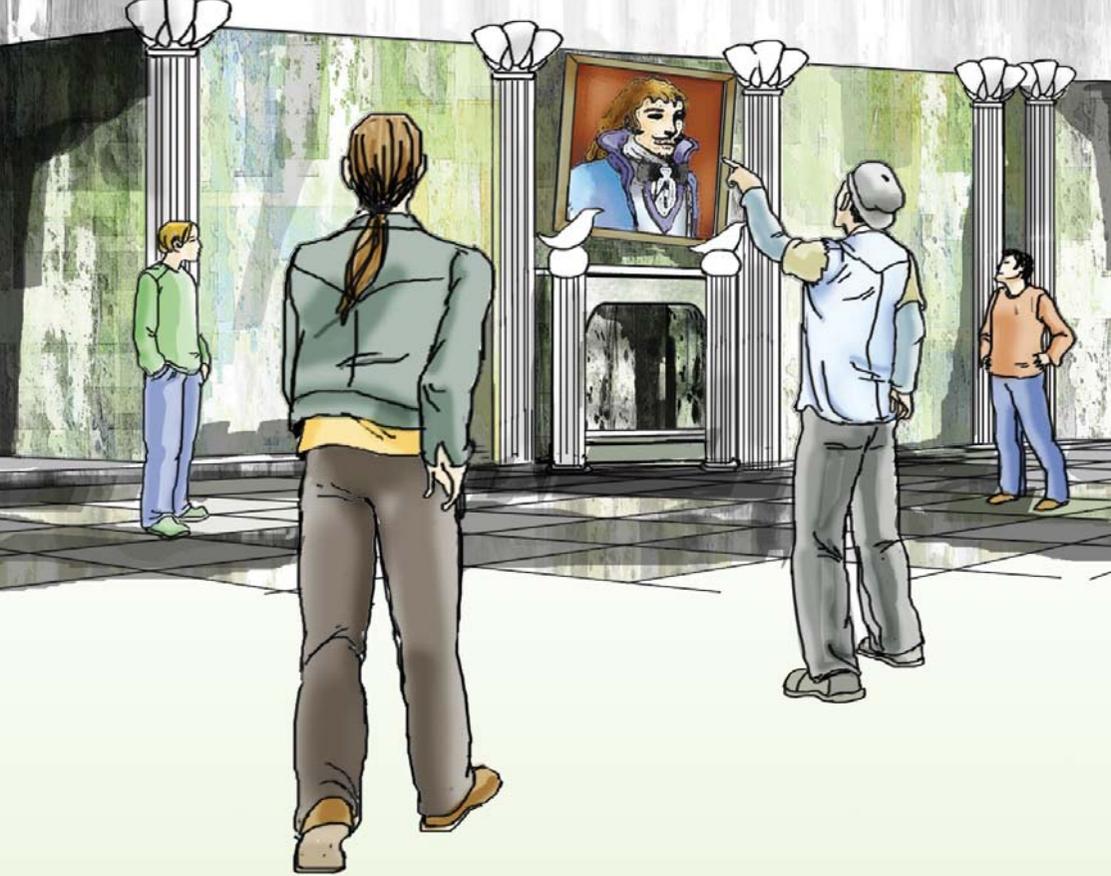
"Yeah, you could be right

about that," said Jim.

The door was broken, so it was easy for us to push it open and get in.

"There must be a really big room somewhere on the ground floor. Let's go and find it," said Brad.

We went through the kitchen. Everything was covered in dust. Then we found the big room.



"What a huge room!" said Jim. "It's as big as a bowling alley!"

"Wow! Isn't that ceiling amazing? Look at all those decorations," said Brad.

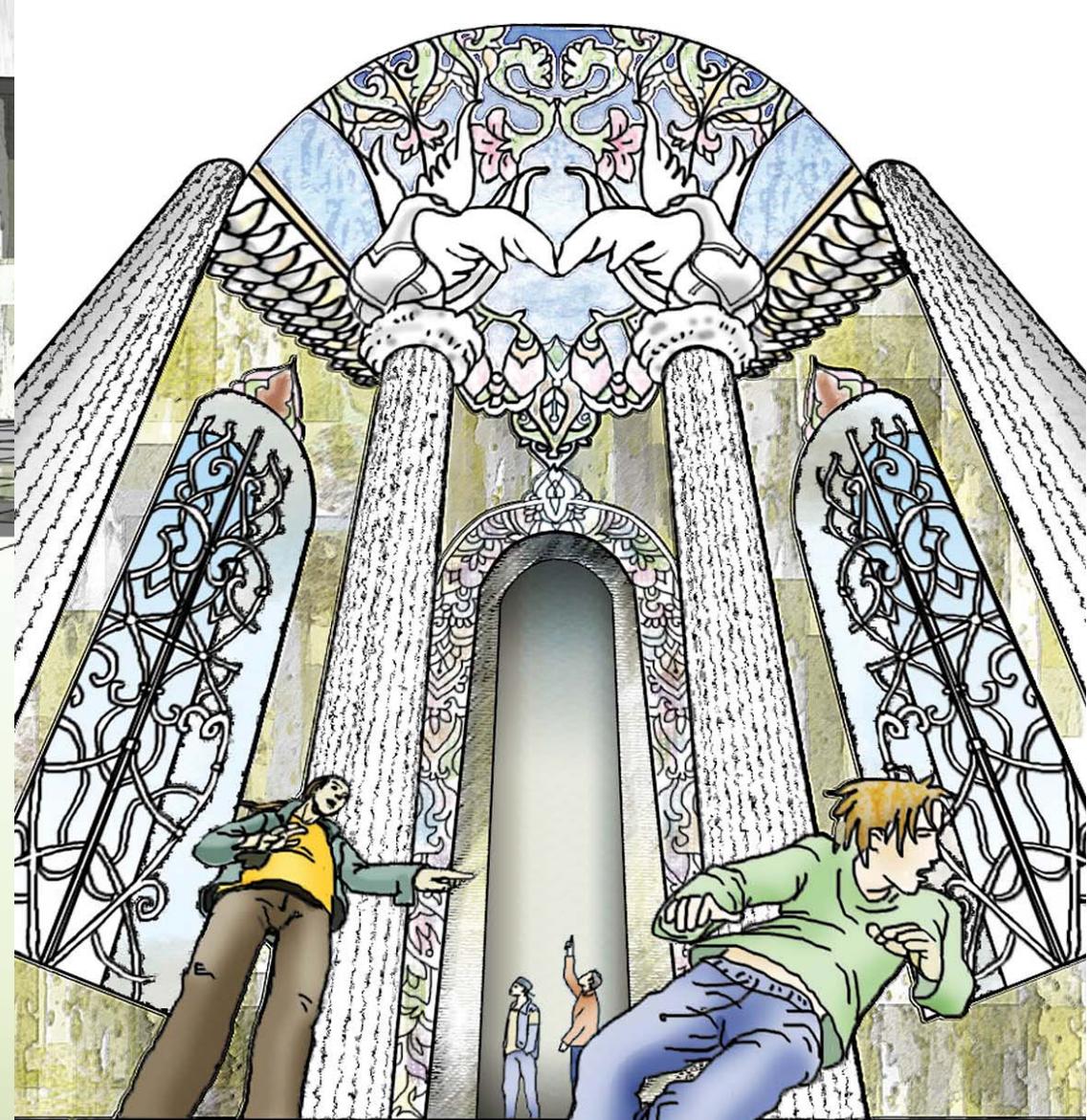
"Well, this was probably a really nice place at one time, but it sure is in a terrible state now," said Jim.

"Right - it looks as if the owners just went away and left it," said Serdar.

"Shall we go upstairs and have a look around?" said Brad.

"OK - wait for us!"

"What a long staircase! My legs are dropping off," said Jim.



"Stop complaining, Jim. Come on, Brad, let's have a look in that room over there."

"Watch out! Those floorboards are broken."

"Oops!"

"Are you all right, Brad?"

"Yeah, I'm OK."

VOCABULARY

<i>American English</i>	<i>British English</i>
apartment (page 3)	flat
"Sure are!" (p. 5)	"We certainly are!"
"Holy smoke!" (p. 11)	"Good heavens!"
buddy (p. 16)	friend
dude (p. 16)	man (sometimes a stupid man)

"Right on!" (p. 5) means "Yes, I agree!"

"Quick march!" (p. 5) is what an army officer says to his soldiers when he wants them to start marching
'in even worse shape' (p. 7) means 'in even worse condition'

"Oops!" (p. 9) is something you say when you make a small mistake or have a small accident

"He's coming to get us!" (p.12) means "He's coming to attack us!"

"I don't get it." (p. 13) means "I don't understand."

an 'undying love' (p. 13) is a love that does not die

'stunned' (p. 17) means 'very shocked and upset'

a 'medicine man' (p. 25) is a Native American shaman

CULTURAL NOTES

'Pasha' (p. 13) is a Turkish word meaning 'general'. In the Ottoman Empire, some high-ranking civil servants were also given the title 'Pasha'. It is put after a man's first name.

'Bey' (p. 19) is a Turkish word that you use after a man's first name as a sign of respect. It means 'gentleman'.

'Hanım' (p. 19) is a Turkish word that you use after a woman's first name as a sign of respect. It means 'lady'.

WHAT DO YOU THINK?

Pages 3 - 13

Before reading

Skyhawk, Brad, Jim and Serdar are going to visit the old house in the street behind Mary's apartment. What do you think they will find when they go in?

After reading

- 1 Skyhawk and his friends are 'happy with the way things are going at the university'. Why?
- 2 Why did they go into the old house through the *back door*?
- 3 What did Brad find interesting about the house?
- 4 Who saw (or thought he saw) the Wisdom Bird?
- 5 Who said these things, and when?
 - a "Was that Serdar you were talking to?"
 - b "Ready for a bit of exploring?"
 - c "Yeah, you could be right about that."
 - d "My legs are dropping off."
 - e "It's just unbelievable."
 - f "But sir, it was I who spoke."
 - g "I don't get it. It doesn't make sense."

Pages 14 - 22

Before reading

How do you think Lord Max met Gülnihal?

After reading

- 1 Why did Lord Max think Serdar was a magician?
- 2 When and why did Lord Max look 'stunned'?
- 3 What did Lord Max tell Brad about the house?
- 4 When and where did Lord Max meet Gülnihal?
- 5 Why did Lord Max ask Ferit Bey to paint the picture?
- 6 On page 20, Lord Max says: "I spent all my days in this room looking at the picture." Why did he do this?
- 7 Why did Lord Max's parents come to Istanbul? Why didn't he want to go back to London with them?