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



Getting Lord Max back inside the picture has made us all feel much better. Now we can go to our classes at university and start living normal lives again. Today was the first day of our new freedom. It was wonderful – we felt as if an enormous weight had been lifted from our shoulders. This morning I could hear Jim singing in his room as I got out my books and finally sat down to do a bit of reading after a long interruption.

We'd been thinking of inviting our friends Michael and Tony to dinner for a quite a long time, but we just hadn't got round to it because of our aristocratic visitor. Anyway, yesterday we finally called Michael and Tony and invited them round for a meal this evening.

After half an hour with my books, I wanted a cup of coffee. I got up to go to the kitchen and bumped into Brad in the corridor. I could see he was holding a piece of paper behind his back.

"What's that piece of paper?" I asked.

"Oh ... nothing."

"Then why are you trying to hide it?"

Just then, Jim came out to see what was happening. "Hey, Jim!" I said. "You see that piece of paper in Brad's hand? He's trying to hide it from us." "Oh, is he, indeed?" said Jim, smiling sweetly. "OK, Brad. We're all friends, right? Friends don't have secrets from each other. Now show that piece of paper to your Uncle Jim, there's a good boy."

"What piece of paper? I'm not trying to hide anything." "In that case, what's that in your hand?" "So what's it to you?" said Brad, his face beginning to turn red – perhaps with anger, perhaps with embarrassment. "What's it to me?" repeated Jim, mocking him. "Well, I'm wondering whether that piece of paper in your hand might possibly be ... a love letter. Come on, Brad, hand it over!"

Jim tried to snatch the letter from Brad's hand, but Brad fought back.

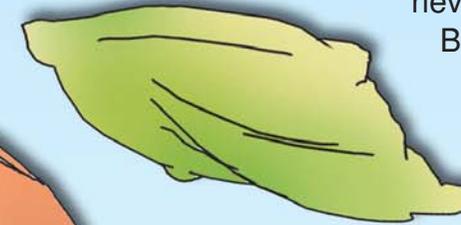
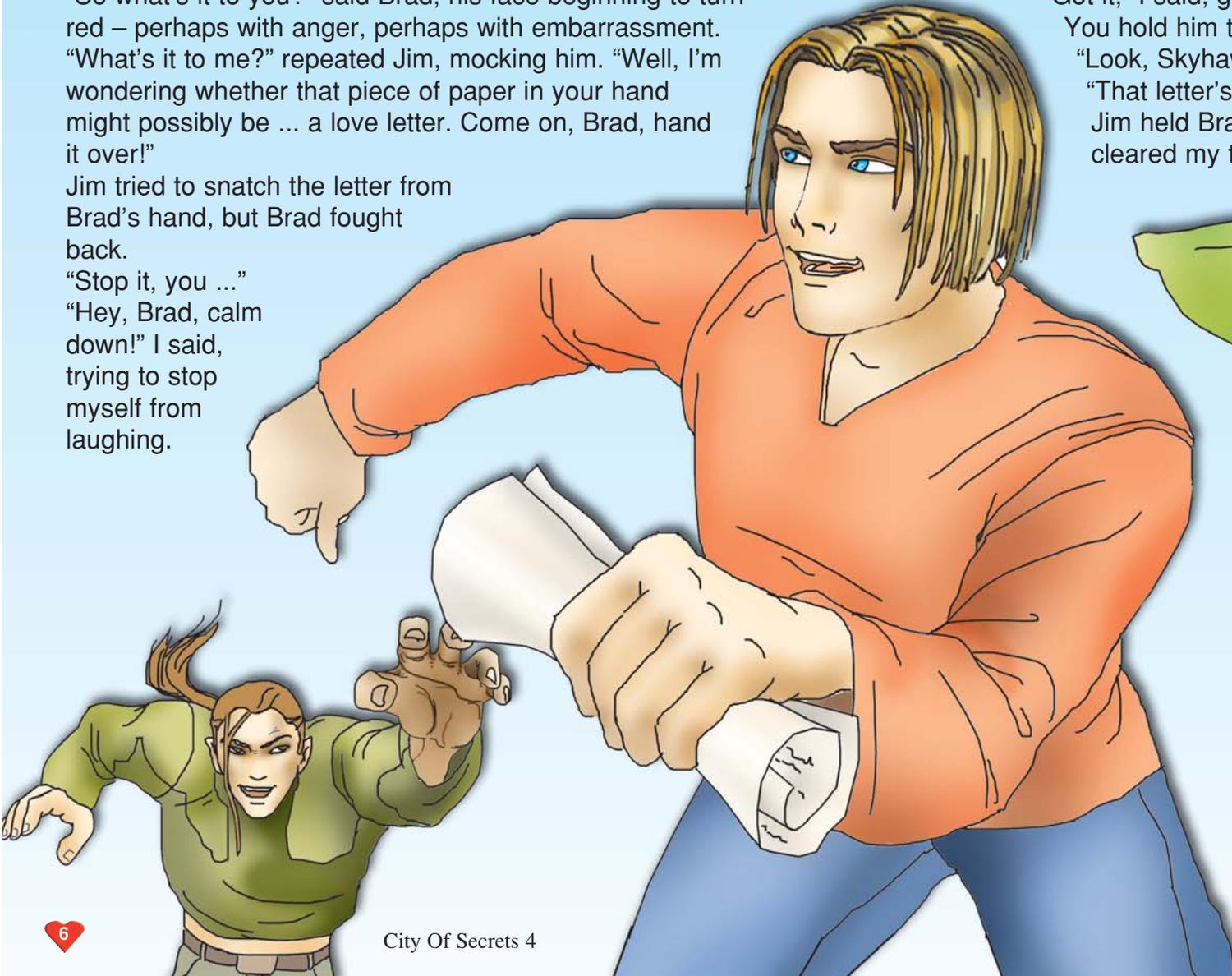
"Stop it, you ..."
"Hey, Brad, calm down!" I said, trying to stop myself from laughing.

"It's a letter to Mary, isn't it?" said Jim. "Confess!" "That's none of your business," protested Brad. "Just leave me alone, you ..."
Jim managed to trap Brad's right arm behind his back. "OK, Skyhawk, I've got him!" he said. "Now get that piece of paper out of his hand."
"Let me go!"

"You can't get away, Brad," said Jim. "Don't even try!" "Got it," I said, grabbing the letter from Brad's hand. "OK, Jim. You hold him tight while I read us all a love story."
"Look, Skyhawk," said Brad, trying to pull his arm free. "That letter's mine. Just give it back to me!"
Jim held Brad from behind while I opened the letter out, cleared my throat and prepared to read ...

"If you read that, Skyhawk, I'll never speak to you again," Brad threatened.

Just as I thought, it was a letter to Mary. "Ah! Oh, dear me, how romantic!" I said. "Just listen to this, Jim."



“Your eyes are like lights in my darkness ...” I began.
“Don’t you dare, Skyhawk! Not another word!”
“Brad! Well, well, well! You really are in love with her, aren’t you? Now isn’t that nice? And why didn’t you tell us, may I ask?” demanded Jim.
“Shut up, Jim,” hissed Brad.
“Whenever I see your hair ...”
“Hey, Skyhawk, I’m serious! Just stop reading that ...”
“No, Skyhawk, go on. Tell us the rest,” said Jim.

Just then, Brad managed to free himself from Jim’s grip.
“Right, give that to me!” Brad shouted, trying to grab the letter from my hands.
“Jim, help me!” I yelled, trying to fight Brad off with one hand and holding the letter away from him with the other. Jim took the letter from me before Brad could reach it.
“Quick, Jim! Get away! I’ll hold him while you read it,” I said.

So I took my turn holding our bashful lover from behind as he tried to kick Jim.
“Hold still, Brad!” I said, still trying not to laugh.
“OK, you guys. For the last time, *will – you – give – that – to – me?*” Brad was finding it difficult to sound threatening because I was squeezing his throat.
“Yeah, of course we’ll give it to you, Brad – just as soon as you’ve answered our questions,” said Jim mildly. “First question: have you told Mary the good news?”
“What good news? What do you mean?” he asked.
“Don’t be funny, Brad,” I said. “You’ve had eyes for no one else except Mary ever since we came to Istanbul. Who else could this letter possibly be to?”
“That? It’s just something I ... er ... copied out of a book.”
“Out of a book? Oh, really?” I said with a pleasant smile. “In that case, why did you go nuts when I started reading it? No, Brad. You’ll have to think of something better than that.”
“Well, I just love books like that,” said Jim. “Let me read you some more. *And whenever you look my way, my dearest, ...*”



“OK, OK,” said Brad, trying to sound reasonable. “This has gone on long enough. The joke’s over, right? Give that thing back ...”
“Not until you’ve answered our questions fully,” I replied.
“Question one,” said Jim. “Are you in love with Mary? Question two: does Mary know about it?”
“All right, all right,” said Brad with a sigh. “That’s enough. No, *I – am – not – in – love – with – Mary*. OK? I just like her. What’s wrong with that?”
“Ahh! At last. He admitted it,” I said. “But that isn’t the whole truth, is it? Come on, Brad. A nice young boy like you shouldn’t hide things from your friends. Tell us you love her. We won’t be angry.”
“Look, I did not write that. I just copied it from a book, OK?”
Every time Brad said it, it sounded less and less convincing. And that’s exactly what I told him.
“All right, you win,” said Brad finally, in a tired voice. “I’ll admit to anything you like. Just give me that letter.”
“Jim,” I said, “what do you say? Should we let him go?”
“Sure,” said Jim, handing the letter back to Brad. “He’s told us what we wanted to know, anyway.”

A short time later we were all in the supermarket. Brad was still sulking and wouldn’t speak to us.
“Have we got everything?” I asked.
“Let’s just have a look at that list,” said Jim.
Just then, the muffled sound of a telephone came from Brad’s pocket. He put the phone to his ear and turned away from us.
“Oh, hi! ... We were just doing the shopping for this evening ... Yes, we’ve bought salad as well ... Yes, they’re with me now.”
“Who’s he talking to?” asked Jim.
“Mary, of course,” I replied. “Can’t you tell by his voice?”
Brad turned and looked at us angrily, then went on. “No, it’s all right. They were just asking me something ... They were asking if you’d like to come round for dinner this evening as well ... No, you wouldn’t be disturbing us. I’m sure Michael and Tony would love to see you ... OK, I’ll tell them. See you this evening, then ... Bye!”
Jim and I looked at Brad as he put his phone away. “Let’s make sure we’ve got enough for one more person, then,” I said, grinning.



VOCABULARY

page

- 5** *interruption*: an unexpected pause or break during sthg
hadn't got round to it: hadn't done it because we hadn't had time
bumped into Brad: met Brad (when I wasn't expecting to)
- 6** *mocking him*: laughing at him in an unkind way
snatch: take quickly and suddenly
- 7** *Confess!*: Admit it!
protested Brad: said Brad, disagreeing strongly
grabbing: taking quickly and in a rude way
cleared my throat: made a noise in my throat to show that I was going to say sthg important
- 8** *Don't you dare*: don't do it (sthg you say to tell sb not to do sthg when you are angry with them)
hissed: whispered loudly and angrily
grip: a strong hold
yelled: (informal) shouted
bashful: shy and embarrassed
Hold still: keep still; stop moving
mildly: kindly and gently
go nuts: (informal) get very angry
- 10** *reasonable*: sensible and fair
with a sigh: in a tired voice that showed he didn't want to argue
convincing: easy to believe
sulking: unhappy and silently angry
muffled: (describing a sound) not easy to hear because it is covered or hidden by sthg
Can't you tell by his voice?: Can't you guess it by listening to his voice?
grinning: with a wide smile
- 12** *feel dizzy*: feel as if her head was turning round and round
couldn't think straight: couldn't think about the situation sensibly
- 13** *make the first move*: do sthg about the situation before she did
- 14** *irritable*: easy to annoy or make angry
grumpily: in a way that showed he was unhappy and annoyed
grumbled: complained
thud: the sound that sthg heavy makes when it falls on the floor
fainted: suddenly became unconscious for a short time (because of a shock)

WHAT DO YOU THINK?

Pages 5-13

Before reading

- 1 This is Book 4 in the *City of Secrets* story. How much do you know about the story so far? Who in the story ...
... is at university? ... helps Skyhawk when he is in trouble?
... had to complete an important task? ... is in love?
... thought Lord Max was a ghost? ... wrote an important letter?
... made friends with the Globetrotters in Istanbul?
... is in a painting (at the end of Book 3)?

After reading

- 1 How do the Globetrotters feel about life without Lord Max?
- 2 What are their plans for the evening?
- 3 Mark these statements true (T) or false (F).
 - a Jim and Skyhawk were angry with Brad. _____
 - b Brad's piece of paper was a letter to Mary. _____
 - c Mary thinks she might be in love. _____
 - d Mary has decided to tell Brad how she feels. _____
- 4 Mary thought that Brad 'certainly behaved as if he was interested in her'. What exactly did Brad do?
- 5 Look at what Brad said to Mary on the telephone (page 10). Using Brad's lines, imagine what Mary said on the telephone. Then practise the telephone conversation with a partner. Begin like this:
Brad: Hello? - *Mary:* Hi, Brad, it's me, Mary. - *Brad:* Oh, hi!

Pages 14-21

Before reading

- 1 Look at the picture on page 15. Who has arrived at the apartment? How does Jim feel?
- 2 These words are all in the next part of the story: *shock* (n), *grumpy*, *complain*, *faint* (v), *unconscious*, *grumble*. Check their meanings in your dictionary. What do you think happens?

After reading

- 1 Why did Jim and Brad faint?
- 2 Why didn't Jim want to talk to Lord Max and Gülnihal?
- 3 Does Gülnihal want to stay in the modern world? Why? / Why not?
- 4 In the kitchen, Brad said: 'I'd forgotten all about that.' What was *that*? Why was it a problem?