RICHARD CHISHOLM

Meet Me in Istanbul
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Journey to Istanbul

It is early morning on a sunny spring day in April. Heathrow Airport, London, is busy, as usual. Hundreds of people are arriving, leaving, or waiting for planes.

In the Departure Lounge of Terminal One, a man is sitting reading a newspaper. He does not like airports. There are too many people, and he is always nervous when he flies. He looks at his watch impatiently. Then he hears the announcement over the loudspeakers.

‘British Airways announce the departure of Flight BE570 for Istanbul. Will passengers please proceed to Gate 16 for boarding.’

Tom Smith picks up his suitcase and walks towards Gate 16.

Twenty minutes later, the plane is preparing to leave. It moves slowly across the airport to runway number two. Tom is sitting looking out of the window.

The plane suddenly moves forward, races down the runway and rises into the air. Tom looks down at the houses and roads far below, and smiles. London is behind him. Now he is on his way to Istanbul.

Tom relaxed and took a letter from his pocket.

Resat Bey Apt 11-3,  
Kamerot Sokak,  
Ayazpasa, Istanbul

My dear Tom,

Thank you for your letter. I am so happy that you can come and visit me for a holiday. Life here in Istanbul is very interesting. I am
enjoying my work, but I miss you very much. It will be wonderful to see you again.

I'm sure we will have a very nice holiday. Spring is here, and the weather is beautiful.

I have to work on Monday 14th of April – the day you arrive. So I can't come to the airport to meet you, but you can take a taxi from the Air Terminal to Taksim Square. That's in the centre of the new part of the city. There's a big hotel called the Park Hotel near the square. I'll meet you there at 5 o'clock. We'll meet in the American Bar. The view over the city is beautiful.

I can't wait to see you again, Tom. I have so much to tell you. So remember, the Park Hotel, Taksim Square, 5 o'clock.

See you on the 14th.

love,
Angela.

Tom sat for a moment, looking at his fiancée's letter. Then he put it in his pocket. He looked down at the green fields of France, as the plane continued its journey across Europe.

'Have you been to Istanbul before?' said a voice. It was the young man in the next seat.

'No, I haven't,' said Tom. 'Have you?'

The man smiled.

'My home is in Istanbul. I'm studying in London at the moment. I'm going home for a holiday.'

'Really?' said Tom. 'Where are you studying?'

'At London University.'

The two men sat talking, as the stewardesses began serving lunch. The young man told Tom his name was Kemal. His parents had a shop in Istanbul.

'Are you meeting someone in Istanbul?' Kemal asked.

'My fiancée,' said Tom. 'She's working in Istanbul.'

'That's interesting. How long has she been there?'

She went to Istanbul two months ago. She works for a small
company which is starting to export\(^7\) to England. She’s making all the arrangements.’

‘Exporting always seems so difficult,’ said Kemal.

‘It seems difficult,’ Tom agreed. ‘But that’s Angela’s job. She’s an expert\(^8\) in importing and exporting. Her father has an import/export agency\(^9\) in London and she has worked for him for some years. She’s almost completed her work in Istanbul now. The company has already started to send goods to England. She’ll be coming back to London soon.’

‘What kind of goods do they export?’ asked Kemal.

‘All kind of things – brass ornaments, coffee-pots, trays leather and onyx articles\(^10\) – Angela’s father thinks these goods will sell very well in England.’

‘That’s interesting,’ said Kemal. ‘My parents sell things like that in their shop in Istanbul.’

The two men went on talking as the plane flew over Italy and Greece towards Turkey. Soon they were descending to Yesilkoy Airport, Istanbul.

When the plane stopped, Kemal stood up.

‘I hope you enjoy your stay in Istanbul,’ he said. ‘Here’s my telephone number. If you need anything, phone me. I live in Sisli. It’s not far from the centre of the city.’

‘Thanks, Kemal, that’s very kind of you.’
‘Not at all,’ replied Kemal. ‘Nice to meet you. And now, goodbye.’

Tom went through Customs and Immigration\textsuperscript{11} and walked towards the airport exit.

\textit{2}

\textbf{The American Bar}

A bus for the City Air Terminal\textsuperscript{12} was waiting outside the airport. Tom got in and sat down beside the window. Other passengers got on and the bus left the airport and drove towards Istanbul.

Soon they were driving past the houses and apartment blocks\textsuperscript{13} near the city. Then they passed the old city walls. Tom felt excited, and looked at everything. He saw beautiful old mosques\textsuperscript{14} and street markets.

The bus was now approaching the centre of old Istanbul. It stopped at some traffic lights.

A car stopped beside the bus. The door opened and a woman got out. Two men were with her. Suddenly Tom jumped to his feet. It was Angela!

‘Angela!’ Tom shouted. ‘Angela! Here! It’s me, Tom!’

He knocked on the bus window. Suddenly the traffic lights changed and the bus moved forward. Tom ran to the back of the bus. Angela and the two men were going into a building.

‘Angela!’ he shouted. ‘An . . . ’ He stopped. It was too late. The bus was moving quickly down a wide street. The passengers were looking at Tom and he suddenly felt foolish. He walked back to his seat and sat down.

What a surprise, he thought to himself. I must tell her when I see her this evening.