

A Picture to Remember

Aim

- To stimulate students to read the book.

- 1 Ask students if they have a favourite painting, or if there's a painting they know well. Ask them to describe it to a partner. Ask some students to tell the class about their painting.
- 2 If possible, find a reproduction of Claud Monet's *Wild Poppies, near Argenteuil* (1873). You can use the internet to find the picture and then print it out; alternatively, you can ask students to carry out some internet research as preparation for this lesson. Ask students to describe the picture and express their feelings about it. Tell them this picture is important in the story.
- 3 Tell students that Cristina Rinaldi works at the art museum in Buenos Aires. One afternoon after work, she is riding her motorbike to the gym where she works out every day. Ask students to read Extract 1 (next page). Ask them who they think the men in the car are, and what they think the men might do now that Cristina has seen them.
Answers: the two men are criminals; they would be worried that Cristina might recognise them, and so would want to kill her.
- 4 Ask students to read Extracts 2. Ask them these questions: What is the important job she has to do? What other country is involved? Who is coming to Buenos Aires? How does Cristina feel about this job?
- 5 Tell students that the two criminals (Roberto and Carlos Bocuzzi) plan to kill Cristina so that she doesn't tell the police about them. Ask them to read Extracts 3. Ask them: What three ways did they try to kill her? What happened in each case so that she didn't die?
Answers: she saw the weight falling and moved; the car hit Philippe not her; their car crashed so they couldn't shoot her.
- 6 Ask students to read Extract 1 again. What kind of tattoo does Roberto have?
Answer: a red poppy.
If you have the Monet painting or the book, show students the painting. Ask them to read Extract 4. Ask them what the link between the extracts is.
Answer: the red poppy.
- 7 Tell students that the story ends six months later when the Impressionist exhibition opens in Buenos Aires. Ask them to read Extract 5. Philippe's final question is not given. Ask students what they think the question was, and what Cristina answered.
Answer: 'Will you come with me?'
- 8 Ask students to read the sentences in the Story Summary and put them in the correct order.
Answers: f, b, d, a, h, c, g, e

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Extract 1

She stopped and looked into the car next to her. She saw two men in the car. She couldn't believe her eyes. One of the men had a gun. Then he looked out of the window at Cristina. She looked into his eyes, into his dark brown eyes and for a moment the man looked back. Then he turned his head and she saw a tattoo of a flower, a red poppy, on his neck.

Then she heard the sound of police cars. The man in the car lifted up his gun. Cristina felt afraid.

Extracts 2

- a Leonardo Martinez asked Cristina Rinaldi to come into his office.
'I want to talk to you about an important job I'd like you to do . . . A museum in Paris wants to send some Impressionist paintings to Buenos Aires. I spoke to the Paris museum director, Philippe Maudet, this morning and he's interested in using our museum to show the paintings. It's an important job. Would you like to do it?'
- b Cristina felt good all day. She loved Impressionist paintings. This new exhibition was wonderful. She couldn't wait to begin.
- c For two weeks Cristina worked on the Impressionist exhibition. She read a lot about the Paris museum and made plans for the director of the museum, Philippe Maudet, to visit Buenos Aires.
- d The museum and her hours were the same but her work was very different. The new exhibition was keeping her very busy and she was very happy.

Extracts 3

- a Roberto . . . wanted to believe that Cristina was dead. But he remembered every moment of the evening before in the gym. He was using one of the weights in the weights room. Cristina was there in front of him, ready to lift a heavy weight . . . When she started to lift the weight, he moved nearer to her. When the weight was right above her head, he ran forward and pushed the weight down hard. She opened her eyes and looked at him. She saw the weight falling and moved just in time. The weight hit the floor. Then she shouted and people from the other room ran to her. Roberto left quickly and quietly.
- b Philippe and Cristina . . . stopped at the side of the road to look for a taxi. There were always black and yellow taxis around but sometimes it was difficult for them to stop in the heavy traffic.
Suddenly an old Peugeot 504 which was parked on Avenida del Libertador, started and drove towards them. Cristina was looking for a taxi when she saw the Peugeot coming right at them. She shouted and pulled Philippe back from the road, but it was too late – the car hit Philippe and then drove away along the Avenida.
- c 'Go, Daniel! Move! He's got a gun! He's going to kill us!' she shouted . . .

The Peugeot was still following them. Daniel turned into Calle Montevideo. Cristina saw the two light and dark blue police cars parked across the road near her flat . . .

Daniel stopped the car suddenly and pushed Cristina down onto the floor of the car. The Peugeot behind was going so fast that Carlos couldn't stop it . . . Then it hit one of the police cars and turned over.

Extract 4

Cristina put the phone down and looked at the picture of the Claude Monet painting she had on the wall in her office. When she was fifteen years old she went to France with her parents and fell in love with that painting with its field of red poppies . . . She kept the picture on the wall of her office because it made her feel good. She had the same picture on her bedroom wall. She often looked at it when she was thinking. But today she looked away from it quickly. There was something strange about the picture today. It didn't make her feel happy. It gave her a strange feeling inside. She didn't know why.

Extract 5

Cristina felt a hand on her arm. She knew that hand. It was Philippe. He had come back to Buenos Aires often while they were organising the exhibition and they had spent a lot of time together.

Philippe spoke quietly in Cristina's ear, 'It's really happening. Your parents and friends are here. The paintings are here. Monet's poppies are here. And we're here together to see them too.'

'I know. It's wonderful. I wish you and your paintings could stay here for ever.'

'No, I have to go home. But I want to ask you something. When I take my paintings home . . .'

Story Summary

Put the sentences in the correct order.

- a Philippe Maudet arrives in Buenos Aires from Paris to discuss the exhibition.
- b She sees a man with a poppy tattoo and a gun in a car as she rides to the gym after work.
- c Her friend Daniel takes her home and they are chased by the Bocuzzi brothers in their car.
- d The man with the poppy tattoo (Roberto Bocuzzi) tries to kill her with a weight at the gym.
- e The exhibition opens six months later.
- f Cristina Rinaldi is starting to organise an exhibition of Impressionist paintings in Buenos Aires.
- g The Bocuzzi brothers crash their car and Daniel and Cristina are saved.
- h The Bocuzzi brothers hit Philippe with their car when they try to kill Cristina for the second time.