

THE END  
OF  
PARADISE

A Novel

George Bauer

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*For my Mother and Father*



# Author's Biography

George Bauer has been telling stories for more than a quarter of a century, as a broadcast and print journalist.

He has worked as a reporter and anchor for radio and television stations, as well as networks both in the United States and Great Britain. Bauer has written scores of articles and columns for newspapers, magazines, and online, as well as taught broadcast journalism classes, from New England to Arizona.

Bauer is creator and host of **The Seasoned Traveler**, a program geared to older travelers. The program is seen on U.S. public television stations and has been viewed in 117 nations overseas via The Travel Channel International. He wrote a companion book for the series, **The Seasoned Traveler: A Guide for Baby Boomers and Beyond**.

Raised in Hyde Park, part of New York's Hudson Valley, he has also made his home in Boston (MA), Washington (D.C.), Tucson (AZ), Chicago (IL), Columbus (OH), Long Island (NY), Princeton (NJ) and London (England). He now resides with his wife in the countryside, west of Atlanta.



# Prologue

Even though he was retired, Martin Chesterton was always an early riser. In fact, the older he became, the earlier he seemed to rise. He told his wife and others that as his time on earth dwindled, he wanted to pack as much as possible into his remaining days.

So, at five-thirty on a sunny morning, Chesterton was out walking his golden retriever along Ferry Road in St. George's Parish, Bermuda. The dog's name was Philip, in honor of the husband of Britain's Queen Elizabeth II. As was normally the case, he expected the young female jogger to pass him shortly. She always did at about this point in his daily journey. Chesterton walked Philip every day except Sunday and his acquaintance passed him every weekday. They generally said hello to each other, but neither knew the other beyond that.

Philip stopped momentarily to nose around in some tall grass just off the road and as Chesterton looked around he saw the runner approaching. He found her most appealing in her brightly-colored running shorts and sport top, with dazzling white running shoes and a yellow headband to help mop up perspiration. He admitted that one of the reasons he so enjoyed his morning walk, was the very sight of her.

"Good morning, my dear," Martin Chesterton said in greeting as he flashed her his usual smile. "Lovely day."

"Good morning," she panted. "Yes, it is beautiful this morning." It was all they had time for because by now she was generally ten to twenty paces ahead of him when they completed their morning salutation.

Philip had satisfied his curiosity and resumed his march forward. Chesterton was now admiring the back view of the jogger, from her upper back down to her outstanding legs, as she continued moving away from him. It seemed only a few seconds passed when the normal calm of the morning was wrenched apart.

The jogger screamed. She had stopped running and was standing by the side of the road, looking with horror at something in the ravine. Chesterton increased his stride and Philip began to trot alongside.

A body. The naked body of a young woman lay in a pool of dried blood in a ditch along Ferry Road. She appeared to have been stabbed and her throat slashed.

The jogger was now in a state of shock. Chesterton attempted to console her as much as possible, while trying to keep Philip from fulfilling his instinctive need to investigate the object on the ground. The old man devised a plan.

“As you are able to move more quickly than I, perhaps you could run up to the next house and call the police. I’ll stay here. Could you also call my home and tell my wife I am fine but will be delayed?”

He gave her his telephone number but, fearing she would forget it, given her distress, he told her his name and said his phone number was in the directory. She ran off and he sensed that it was at a faster pace than normal.

As he waited, Martin Chesterton discovered he had a difficult time resisting the urge to look at the body of the victim, even though she had been mutilated viciously. He couldn’t help thinking what a lovely young woman she had been, but the many stab wounds and her blood-matted hair made her look quite awful. The more he looked, the more unsettled his stomach became. When he thought his nausea was about to get the better of him, he walked away from the body. He bent forward and retched into the ravine. Once over his lapse, he wiped his mouth with a tissue and straightened up. In the distance, he could now hear the unmistakable sounds of a police siren. Chesterton knew that help was not far off.



# BOOK ONE

## The Murder

### Chapter 1

*Friday, June 21*

The white jetliner with the distinctive red Maple Leaf on the tail banked to the left on its approach to Bermuda. Air Canada Flight 942 was in the final moments of its regular journey from Toronto.

In her left-side window seat, Jessica Middleman smiled as she gazed out at the vast, multi-colored ocean and her first sighting of the lush green islands of Bermuda. Directly below the aircraft, the sun shone upon a brilliant turquoise expanse of the Atlantic in the shallow, sandy outcrops of the island-chain. Every so often, Jessica could see what appeared to be rock formations, which were actually coral reefs. The turquoise water contrasted with the darker teal blue farther offshore as ocean depths increased.

“How beautiful!” she exclaimed silently, a smile forming.

Everything had gone smoothly so far. The plane was on time. Clear weather along the way made the two-hour, forty-minute trip smooth and comfortable. Even the breakfast was good. And now Jessica was lucky enough to be sitting on the side of the aircraft which afforded a magnificent view of Bermuda as the jet flew in from the northwest. “It’s going to be a great vacation,” she told herself.

For the seventeen-year-old Canadian girl, it was the

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beginning of a dream holiday, her first trip away from home without her parents and two older brothers. For nearly two months, Jessica Middleman would be staying with a close friend, Sonia Kilbourn, and her father Bob. Sonia had astounded her with descriptions of the tiny country and Jessica decided Bermuda must be the closest thing to Paradise on the face of the earth.

She had been saving for the sojourn for months, babysitting and doing odd-jobs near her home in Peterborough, Ontario, eighty miles northeast of Toronto. She'd been able to buy her airplane ticket, build a small stockpile of cash for her expenses and shopping, and still have enough to buy gifts for her hosts and family members before returning home in late August.

“Ladies and gentlemen, we are making our final approach to Bermuda now. Please make certain that your seatbelts are fastened securely about you and that your seatbacks and tray tables are in their upright and locked positions. You should also discontinue using any portable mechanical devices. On behalf of your Toronto-based crew we wish to thank you for flying with us today. Please remain seated until the aircraft has stopped at the terminal gate. We'll be on the ground in just a few short minutes. Thank you.”

Jessica could now see scores of small boats just beyond the airport runway, which were plying the waters of Castle Harbour. The jet leveled off and proceeded closer to the main runway of what was the former United States Naval Air Station. Washington had turned the facility over to the Bermuda Government in 1995 and it was now known officially as Bermuda International Airport.

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In their last telephone conversation a few nights ago, Sonia had told Jessica it had been raining for much of the month, “a lot more than normal,” she lamented. But on this Friday afternoon, the first full day of summer, the sun was surrounded by miles and miles of blue, cloudless sky. Jessica noticed how brilliant the sky seemed and reminded herself once more how well all was going. Even the weather was now cooperating.

As Flight 942 edged closer to the ground, it passed over Ferry Road in St. George’s Parish. Jessica Middleman was unaware that such a thoroughfare existed. And she had no way of knowing that when she would finally come into contact with Ferry Road, it would be during the last moments of her life.

\* \* \*

Inside the cramped but air-conditioned Arrivals area of the Bermuda Airport terminal building, Bob and Sonia Kilbourn awaited Jessica’s arrival. The pair had only just arrived. It was nearly 1 PM. Sonia wanted to get there much earlier but Bob pointed out passengers had to clear a Bermuda Government Immigration checkpoint, then claim their luggage before they could leave the airport. Sonia paced the terminal space, anxious to greet her friend.

The Kilbourns were Canadian natives. Bob had married a Bermudian woman in Peterborough nineteen years ago. Julia Swan had moved to Canada to attend college and stayed on there to work when she could not find a suitable job back home. Julia was hired as a claims adjuster in the Peterborough branch of a major insurance firm. It was the largest branch office outside Toronto headquarters and served customers in the six eastern provinces of Canada, from Ontario and Quebec to the Maritime Provinces and Newfoundland. The branch manager was Bob Kilbourn.

Julia Swan had been on the job for only a few days when the boss dropped by her workstation to introduce himself and welcome her to the firm. But it soon became clear that Bob Kilbourn saw much more in Julia Swan than a new employee. She was a perfect blend of African and European parents. Her permanently deep-tanned complexion, dark hair, and piercing brown eyes transfixed Bob from almost the moment he saw her.

She in turn found him ruggedly-handsome, intelligent and articulate, but also warm and sensitive. Still, she was not sure at first whether she should accept his subsequent invitations to lunch, dinner, and drives in the country because she wanted to or because she felt her job depended on it. Bob put her at ease, explaining that if she were not genuinely interested in him, it would have no impact on her position within the company.

It soon became clear that her interest in him was as ardent as his for her. So, after their sixth date, she invited him to her apartment to spend the night.

Bob Kilbourn and Julia Swan were married in Bermuda nearly a year after their first encounter in the Peterborough branch office. And Bob became smitten once more, this time with the islands of Bermuda, during the couple's ten-day honeymoon. Mr. and Mrs. Kilbourn returned to Canada and Bob almost immediately contacted his superiors in Toronto about the possibility of running the firm's international branch, based in Hamilton, capital of the tax-shelter islands of Bermuda. He was told his services were needed in Peterborough.

Life in Canada was pleasant enough. Within two years of the wedding, Julia gave birth to a daughter, whom the proud parents called Sonia in honor of Julia's mother. As she grew, Sonia became a close friend of school-mate Jessica Middleman. Their friendship continued through grammar school.

Ten years after Sonia's birth, when the Bermuda branch manager announced his retirement, the corporation's higher-ups

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transferred Bob Kilbourn to the top slot in Bermuda. It was a plum assignment, not only because the weather was a vast improvement over conditions in Canada but because the international arm of the company had increased its business as more companies located offices in Bermuda and sought insurance protection for their operations there. The head of the Bermuda unit was an important company official, was named a corporate Vice President, and could become the Chief Executive Officer if successful. Bob Kilbourn was not interested in the huge corner office in Toronto. He was mesmerized by Bermuda and wanted to stay there as long as he could.

Because of the islands' high cost of living, Bob received a generous salary increase and other perks, including a massive lump sum for a down payment on a house. Because he had married a Bermudian and could eventually claim citizenship himself, Bob was able to purchase a house at a more affordable rate. Bermuda maintained strict regulations on foreign ownership of property, to deter wealthy outsiders from taking the scarce housing stock away from Bermudians.

Julia Swan Kilbourn was thrilled to be enjoying a genteel lifestyle that seemed unthinkable when she left her homeland for college. And her family was pleased that she had come home. They were at first dismayed she had not married a native Bermudian but as they came to know Bob, they grew to love and respect their new family member.

The couple looked at several homes, all priced about five hundred thousand dollars and they chose a sprawling pink "cottage" on high ground in Smith's Parish, on the eastern end of the main island. The cottage was larger than any house Bob had ever lived in. It had four bedrooms, four baths, a parlor, dining room, kitchen, office, and a separate maid's quarters. Outside its pink stucco walls, the cottage commanded a breathtaking view of the South Shore and the Atlantic Ocean. It had a tennis court, a

freshwater swimming pool, and a manicured lawn, festooned with oleander bushes, hibiscus hedges, bitter orange and palm trees, and one-third of an acre of Bermuda grass.

Bob and Julia were enjoying the good life in the lush environment when tragedy struck.

On a brilliantly clear and hot July day, Julia was driving her motor scooter from her home to Hamilton to do some clothes shopping. She needed a dress for a dinner party three days later.

As she drove her bike through an intersection, she was hit broadside by a pink Bermuda bus. The driver claimed he had been blinded by the sun and never saw Julia pulling into the crossroad. She suffered serious head injuries and was rushed to King Edward VII Memorial Hospital in nearby Paget Parish. She lapsed into a coma and died four days later. Bob and daughter Sonia were devastated. They grieved privately for several weeks before returning to their normal routines.

At first, Bob felt incapable of being a single-parent. But he devoted himself wholeheartedly to the task. Within a few months, Bob was comforted to realize his success in raising his daughter nearly approximated his success in the insurance industry. They were the two most important components of his life.

Both Sonia Kilbourn and Jessica Middleman had been heartbroken when Sonia first moved to Bermuda. But the two girls maintained their relationship by mail and occasional telephone conversations. In recent years they had become constant communicators on the World Wide Web. Bob and Sonia returned to Canada about twice a year, which allowed the girls to engage in glorious reunions. Sonia often suggested that Jessica should come visit her in Bermuda but Jessica's parents were always reluctant. They finally told her that at the conclusion of her junior year in high school, if she saved enough money to pay her way and not be a burden to Mr. Kilbourn, she could visit

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Sonia during summer vacation.

And so, on a sunny but steamily-humid June afternoon, Jessica Middleman descended the portable jet stairway onto the tarmac at Gate 4. After the comfort of the Air Canada cabin, she felt assaulted by the full force of the mid-Atlantic heat.

Once inside the terminal, the line to the Immigration checkpoint seemed interminable, perhaps because Jessica was so anxious to see her friend. At least the waiting area was air-cooled as she stood with Canadians and Americans in the “Visitors” line, which snaked to five immigration officers at one end of the room. Jessica noted disparagingly that another line was much shorter. It was for “Citizens, Residents, or Business Persons.” Jessica was none of those, so she resigned herself to the wait, as her watch read 12:52 PM, now Atlantic Daylight Time, one hour ahead of her family in Peterborough.

She also took time to admire a portrait of Queen Elizabeth, above a fireplace in the middle of the room. Jessica couldn't imagine a time when the fireplace would be used, given the heat of this day. She thought the Queen looked rather young and then noticed the picture had been painted just a few years after Elizabeth ascended to the Throne in 1952. And Jessica thought what a small world it was. Canada was a former British colony. Bermuda was still a British possession, even though it had its own Government.

As Jessica contemplated all this, her line moved smartly. She was called by a black female Immigration officer, who welcomed her to Bermuda, looked at her passport, made sure Jessica had a place to stay and enough money so she would not be a burden to the Government, then sent Jessica on her way. By the time she reached the luggage area, suitcases and other traveling paraphernalia were gliding along the moving carriage. Jessica spotted her two cases, dragged them to the floor, and began lugging them toward the exit.

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One last bit of business and she could finally look for her friend. As she left the luggage area, Jessica presented a card to the Bermuda Customs officer. The card had been given to her by the Immigration agent, after Jessica promised she was bringing nothing into the country that would harm Bermuda's environment, its agriculture, or possibly its economy. She handed the card to a white male officer, and was finally at her destination.

Three and a half hours ago her plane had departed Toronto. She smiled, realizing her marvelous eight-week vacation lay ahead of her.

She did not know her dream trip would end in less than two weeks with her death.



## Chapter 2

“Jessie!”

Sonia Kilbourn’s shriek startled her father who had been looking out the window of the Arrivals area and was watching a parasailor soaring high above the waters of Castle Harbour. Sonia began racing through the throngs in the airport and reached Jessica, who let go of her luggage and yelled out Sonia’s name in response. The two girls hugged each other with such intensity they nearly lost their balance and fell to the Airport’s hard tile floor.

“I’m sooooo glad you’ve finally made it!” Sonia chirped.

“And I’m sooooo glad I’m here,” Jessica replied. “It looked absolutely beautiful from the plane window and I’ve only seen the tiniest bit of Bermuda so far.”

“We’ve even fixed the weather for you. It rained last night but the sun’s been out today and we still have half a day to go.”

Bob Kilbourn now joined the smiling duo. “Good afternoon, Jessica, welcome to Bermuda. It’s a pleasure to have you with us,” he said. “I’m also very pleased that you have brought lovely Canadian weather with you. Perhaps the rain will stop once and for all now that you are here with us.”

Jessica broke free of her embrace with Sonia and shook Bob’s hand.

“Mr. Kilbourn, thank you so much for agreeing to let me stay with you for the summer. I’m so happy to be here and I’ve brought some money to help cover my food and other expenses

while I'm here."

"Nonsense..you keep your money for important things," Bob said. "I'm sure Sonia has many plans for you to spend money. Don't you worry about anything. You are our guest and we won't have guests paying for their food but thanks so much for offering. That's very thoughtful of you."

"Well then," Jessica said, "I'm still going to buy you and Son a present before I leave."

"Daddy's got everything," Sonia interjected. "Course, I'm always looking for nice presents."

"I can't imagine you need anything, you selfish girl," said Bob Kilbourn to his daughter, with a grin on his face.

"I'll find you something," Jessica said to each of them.

Bob bent down to pick up Jessica's cases and as he lifted them, he discovered they were extremely heavy.

"Good God, these weigh a ton."

"But Dad, Jessie's going to be here for two months," Sonia threw in.

Not to be outdone, Jessica added, "And I'll probably be buying a lot more clothes while I'm here."

"Then you'll need another suitcase when you return home," Bob said, straining to carry both of the bulging bags toward the Exit. "Come on ladies, let's be on our way."

Bob Kilbourn led them through the Airport door and back into the steambath of early afternoon. Sonia and Jessica followed a few paces behind, already immersed in deep discussion of everything and nothing.

Bob had found a parking place two rows from the building and it took him only about one minute to reach the vehicle, raise its trunk, and put Jessica's luggage inside. As he unlocked the car doors, the girls arrived.

"Do you both want to sit in the back so you can continue your important conversation?" Bob asked them.

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“That’s a cool idea, Dad,” Sonia said and, as she opened her door, she gave Bob a peck on the cheek, which made him feel terrific. Here was Sonia thoroughly involved with her guest, yet she was still thoughtful enough to remember to show her gratitude and affection to her father.

“Thank you, m’dear,” said Bob.

Jessica joined Sonia in the back seat of Bob’s Japanese car. The pounding Bermuda sun made the inside of the vehicle feel like a blast furnace. Jessica found it difficult to breath in the stuffy confines of the car. Bob revved the engine and activated the air-conditioning system.

“It’ll take a few minutes but we’ll have it cooler in here shortly,” Bob announced. “By the way, Jess, how do you react to the heat here in Bermuda?”

“Well, it’s much hotter here than in Ontario, that’s for sure,” Jessica replied.

Bob pointed out that the temperature at that very moment was probably around eighty degrees Fahrenheit but the relative humidity might be as high as eighty-five percent.

“That much moisture in the air makes it feel so much hotter,” Bob said. “But you should get more used to it as time goes on. We get some lovely ocean breezes at the house because we’re on top of a hill.”

“And of course, we’ll be swimming in the pool and the ocean, not to mention roaming through all those air-conditioned shops in Hamilton,” Sonia reminded them.

In a matter of moments, the car had left the Airport complex, entered a roundabout (which Jessica called a traffic circle), and was headed across a long bridge.

Bob became the tour guide. “This is The Causeway. It connects St. David’s island, where the airport is located, with Great Bermuda island, which is where most of the people live. This large body of water is Castle Harbour. The hurricane that hit

the islands last August did extensive damage to this causeway. The Airport and the town of St. George were cut off for about a day until the Government could make emergency repairs.”

Jessica was once again mesmerized by the gleaming green water on both sides of the bridge, the walls of which were made of reef-rocks. “The water is so gorgeous and so clear,” she marveled out loud.

“There are two reasons for that,” Bob offered immediately. “First of all, the water is relatively shallow and the sand on the bottom reflects the sun’s rays, which give it that beautiful turquoise color. And because of Bermuda’s location, there are few nutrients in the water, which is why it is so clear. But we still have problems. Because Bermuda is in a major shipping corridor, we suffer the consequences. When ships throw waste overboard, some of it inevitably washes up on our shores. And when vessels spill, or dump oil, the cool waters in the deep ocean cause it to congeal. It washes up on shore as tar and your feet and swimsuit can get covered with it. Still, once you become acclimatized to all this, you’ll do just fine.”

“I’m looking forward to it,” Jessica replied.

“You’re going to love it,” Sonia said. And they both laughed with excitement.

A few moments later Bob pulled into the cottage’s driveway and Jessica gasped.

“What a beautiful house,” she said. It was bigger than her own house in Canada and larger than most of the homes she had ever seen.

“Well, it’s just a cottage,” Sonia offered.

“If that’s a cottage, what does a castle look like?” Jessica queried.

Bob stopped the vehicle in front of the cottage. “All out for Seabreath,” he said. Jessica knew that Seabreath was the name of the Kilbourn cottage because she always wrote the

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house's name on the envelope when addressing letters to Sonia. Virtually every home in Bermuda had a name. If homeowners merely referred to their properties by the name and not by the street address, it would be more difficult for burglars to know exactly where the home was. And for single women, a cottage name in the telephone directory offered protection from unwanted advances or unwanted guests.

Bob opened the auto's trunk and dragged Jessica's weighty cases out to the hot pavement. He then carried them on their final small trip from the car to the guest bedroom designated for Jessica.

The room was at the back of the cottage, not far from Sonia's room. It was spacious, indeed larger than Jessica's own bedroom back in Peterborough. There were two single beds, a dresser with mirror attached, and two chairs separated by a table and lamp, the perfect spot to read or enjoy afternoon tea on a rainy day.

Bob had placed the luggage on one of the beds. "When you empty all your belongings, there should be room for the bags in the closet. Use either bed, or use both, but then you'll have to change two sets of sheets instead of one." Bob chuckled.

After stopping at the bathroom, Sonia Kilbourrn shuffled along to Jessica's room to help her unpack. Sonia found her guest making a good start, with several pairs of shoes and sandals on the bedroom floor and some clothing in different piles. Sonia approached her friend and hugged her once more.

"Welcome to Bermuda, Jess. It'll be great to have you here for the summer. Which reminds me," Sonia said. "We can spend the rest of the afternoon having some lunch and then hanging around the pool here, or we could drive down to the beach."

"I'm glad you mentioned lunch," Jessica responded, "because I'm quite hungry. After that, I'm easy. The pool or the

beach sounds great to me. But if we decide on the beach, how do we get there?"

"Dad can take us today," said Sonia. "He has the day off from work so he's available. He'll be working for most of the time you're here. But here's the best part. Dad said I can rent a moped so we can get around the islands. Dad won't let me have my own cycle until I finish high school. But he's made an exception in this case. So we can get anywhere we want during the days. Dad won't allow me to drive at night, so if we go out then, he'll take us or we'll just call a taxicab."

"Wow, that's neat, Son!" Jessica squealed. "Do you have your drivers license?"

"No, but you don't need one to rent a bike," Sonia replied. "You just need to be sixteen and pay for insurance to cover the cost of the bike if we have a crackup. Dad will pay the rental fee, which will save me a lot of money, but I'll be responsible for the insurance fee."

Bermuda imposed severe restrictions on the use of automobiles. Not only did the Government regulate the size of vehicles allowed on the islands' narrow, curving, and incessantly traffic-clogged roads but the authorities also decreed that only one automobile would be permitted in each household. Other drivers were required to use motorized cycles, bicycles, taxicabs, the local buses and ferries, or their own two feet.

"Dad's going to take us to the rental shop tomorrow," Sonia announced. "After we fill out the papers and I take a little driving lesson, we'll be on our way."

Jessica asked whether the lesson was difficult.

"Of course not," responded Sonia. "And I've driven a moped a few times since my sixteenth birthday so it should be a piece of cake. And speaking of cake, I'll go make us some lunch while you put away your things. I'll call you when it's all ready and I'll show you the rest of the house after we eat."

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“Thanks, Son,” Jessica said, “and thanks so much for inviting me for the whole summer.”

Sonia Kilbourn headed to the kitchen.

While she was attending to luncheon duties, Bob Kilbourn had gone to the sitting room after depositing Jessica’s bags in the guest room. He first called the voice-mail number at his office, learned that the four new messages could wait until Monday, then sat in his favorite chair and continued reading Bermuda’s daily newspaper, *The Royal Gazette*.

Bob could hear clinking, cutting, and pouring sounds from the kitchen, as Sonia finished preparing lunch. She made cheese sandwiches, divided up a garden salad which was left over from the previous evening’s dinner, and poured three tall glasses of iced tea and added slices of fresh lemon.

As Sonia yelled “Luncheon is served”, Bob strolled to the kitchen table. And half a minute later, Jessica followed. The three ate hungrily and for several seconds, no one spoke. Then Bob decided it was time to remind Sonia and Jessica of a few facts of life in Bermuda.

“Now girls. I want you to understand, and this is especially important for Jessica, since you have never been here before: Bermuda is a very safe place, certainly compared to cities in the United States and some cities in Europe. It’s even safer than Toronto and you both know that is a relatively safe big city,” Bob said. “But just remember that, as in many parts of the world, there are some bad people and they can do bad things. So, when you’re out, I want you both to stay together, be very careful and protective of one another.”

Bob went through a laundry-list of precautions he felt necessary, even in Paradise. “Be careful where you go, keep a close eye on your handbags and other belongings, and take note of strangers.” Bob pointed out that the overwhelming majority of Bermudians were friendly, honest people but he told the girls

they must be vigilant for any eventualities.

“While violent crimes are few, still there are occasional thefts, purse-snatchings, and assaults.” Bob turned to Jessica, saying it was not his intention to frighten her when she had just arrived in the country, but he stressed that it was just good common sense for her to be as cautious as she was in Canada or anywhere else.

“The unemployment rate in Bermuda is very low,” Bob continued, “but not everyone is equally wealthy. Some people, especially younger people, don’t have much money and a few think the quickest and easiest way to get money is to take cash or property from those who have it.”

Bob told Jessica that because he and Sonia lived in a large and well-appointed home, some might consider it a good target for theft or vandalism. “That’s why we have installed a home security system and you’ll need to let Sonia activate and deactivate the alarm system when you are entering or leaving the cottage. We certainly don’t fear for our lives in Bermuda because it’s not that kind of place but we are more cautious nowadays and you should be too,” Bob concluded.

“Oh, Dad!” Sonia jumped in. “You will make Jessica nervous.”

But Jessica interrupted her. “Don’t worry, Sonia. This is something we’ve been told in Canada too. And on the trips my family and I have taken to the States, Mom and Dad were constantly reminding us kids to be careful when we were on our own. I’m sure things will be much safer here but I understand what Mr. Kilbourn is saying.” And she thanked Bob for his message of caution.

When the sandwiches and salad had been consumed, Sonia brought three slices of chocolate cake to the table. She had made it two nights earlier. The three of them made quick work of their portions.



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“So what do you prefer to do this afternoon, Jessie?”  
Sonia inquired.

“Well, I can use a swimming pool anywhere, even in Canada,” Jessica said. “And even though you have a beautiful pool, I’d love to take a trip to the beach and a dip in the ocean water.”

“Right. I’ll drive you down there,” Bob Kilbourn offered. Then I’ll come back to collect you in a couple of hours so we can clean up and head out to dinner tonight to celebrate Jessica’s visit.”

“Great, Dad,” said Sonia. “Where are we going?”

“I thought we’d drive over to the Plantation restaurant so Jessica can try some Bermudian cuisine,” Bob announced.

“Neat!” Sonia shouted.

“Ooh, I’m looking forward to that,” Jessica replied. “Thanks, Mr. Kilbourn.”

Their lunch concluded, the girls washed and dried the dishes, then hurried off to their rooms to don swimsuits and grab sunscreen and beach towels. Sonia reminded Jessica to wear a cover-up over her bathing suit because Bermuda had strict laws about wearing swim gear on the streets. The law, Sonia said, was clear: swimsuits were for the beach or pool but not in other public places.

Before they left, Sonia took her guest on a tour through the rest of the cottage’s dozen rooms.

Twenty minutes later, Bob Kilbourn delivered the duo to John Smith’s Bay beach and returned home. The girls began a two-hour respite of sunbathing, with an occasional romp into the warm Atlantic waters.

“The water temperature in June is close to eighty degrees,” Sonia informed her friend.

During their time on the beach, Sonia and Jessica discussed their plans for the next few days and before they knew

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it, the time had come for Bob to pick them up and return them to the house to prepare for their evening out.

At 7 PM, the three set off to the Plantation, just a short drive around Harrington Sound. For two hours, they dined Bermuda-style. They were home by ten, and, as the night had cooled and a breeze had developed, they decided to sit on the front verandah and search the sky for stars. Each had a glass of lemonade to enjoy during the hour-or-so they sat, stargazed, and gossiped. Then they left the porch, headed to their rooms, and got ready for bed.

