

A Little Trouble in Dublin

by Richard MacAndrew

(Adapted book. beginner level)

CHAPTER ONE

Funny money

'Isn't it beautiful?' said Andy Lawson to his sister, Mary.

'No,' replied Mary. 'It's not beautiful and it's not interesting.'

Andrew Lawson, always called Andy, looked at his sister. She was thirteen and he was thirteen. They were twins - but they were not the same. He was 170 centimetres tall with short red hair and blue eyes. She was only 160 centimetres tall with long dark hair and big brown eyes. They didn't look the same and they didn't think the same.

'Mary,' said Andy. 'Look at it. It's over a thousand years old. Half a million people come here every year. They want to see this because it is very old and very famous.'

Andy and Mary were in the city of Dublin in Ireland. Actually, they were in Trinity College in Dublin and in front

of them was the Book of Kells, 680 pages of words and pictures, and over a thousand years old.

'Well, I don't think it's beautiful,' said Mary. 'I'm going to the shop.' And she walked away.

The shop was in the next room. Mary looked round. There were books and CDs about the Book of Kells, and there were Trinity College T-shirts. Mary looked at the T-shirts.

'I like these,' she thought. 'And they're not too expensive.' She took down a red T-shirt and got out some money. Mary waited with the money in her hand. In front of her was a big man with a green Ireland football shirt. The shirt was much too small for him and Mary saw his stomach. Yuk! The man bought a postcard.

'I'm sorry,' he said to the shop assistant. 'I know the postcards are just 75 cents, but I've only got this.' There was a €20 note in his hand.

'That's OK,' replied the shop assistant.

Mary looked at the money in her hand. It was a €50 note and a kind of orange colour. In England, of course, the money was not the same - pounds not euros.

The man walked away. Mary gave the T-shirt to the shop assistant.

'€14.95, please,' said the shop assistant.

Mary gave her the €50 note. The assistant put the T-shirt in a bag and gave it to Mary. Then she gave her

€35.05. Mary looked at the notes. The €20 note was blue, the €10 note was red, and the €5 note was grey. She put the money in her bag.

Then Andy came into the shop.

'You know, it is beautiful and interesting,' he said, with a smile on his face, 'but not for very long. Come on. I want an ice cream. We've got time. We're meeting Miss O'Brien at five o'clock and it's only three now.'

Andy and Mary were in Dublin with students from their school in England. Their science teacher, Miss O'Brien, was from Dublin and every year she took ten or twelve students there at the start of the summer. The students enjoyed seeing a new city: Dublin is small and friendly, and there is a lot to do. And Miss O'Brien enjoyed seeing her family.

Andy and Mary walked to Grafton Street, one of Dublin's important shopping streets and found an ice cream shop. Andy asked for a chocolate ice cream. Mary wanted a strawberry one. Mary gave the shop assistant €20 and he looked at the note. Then he turned the note over and looked at it again.

'I can't take this,' he said.

'Why not?' asked Mary.

'It's not a real €20 note,' he answered. 'It's forged - it's not real. Look here.' He found a new €20 note and put it on the shop window. Then he put Mary's note next to it.

'Look on the left of the note,' the assistant told Mary. 'You can see a kind of window on the real note, but there isn't one on yours. Yours is forged. Here.'

He gave Mary her note.

'But -' Mary started to speak.

'Have you got some more money for your ice creams?' the man asked.

Mary found some more money.

'The police say there are a lot of those forged notes in the city just now,' the assistant told Mary. 'You need to take that one to the police station.'

CHAPTER TWO

The man with the forged notes

Out in the street again, Mary was angry. She ate some ice cream, then took out the €20 note and looked at it.

'A forged note!' she said. 'Not real! How can I use it now?'

'Listen,' said Andy. 'Why don't we go and tell Miss O'Brien about it?'

'Good thinking,' replied Mary, and they started walking back to their hotel on Fleet Street.

They got to the hotel at about a quarter to four. They found Miss O'Brien and told her about the forged note.

Miss O'Brien looked at it. Then she looked at Mary's face. It was half-angry, half-sad.

'Oh, Mary,' she said and put a hand on her shoulder.

'It's €20,' said Mary. 'That's a lot of money to me and now I can't buy anything with it.'

'That's all right,' said Miss O'Brien. She found her bag and opened it.

'Here,' she said, giving Mary a new €20 note. 'You have this. I can call the police.' She put Mary's forged note on the table in front of her.

'Oh, thank you, Miss O'Brien,' said Mary happily. 'That is kind of you.'

'That's all right,' replied Miss O'Brien. 'Now, are you coming to the cinema this evening?'

'Yes,' answered Mary.

'I don't know,' said Andy.

Miss O'Brien smiled. 'Well, we're meeting in the hotel restaurant at five o'clock.'

Andy and Mary went to their room and watched television for half an hour. But Mary didn't really watch. She thought about the forged note... and the Trinity College shop... and the man with the green Ireland football shirt.

'Yes!' shouted Mary. She turned off the television.

'Hey,' said Andy. 'I'm watching that.'

'Listen,' Mary told him. 'The man in the Trinity College shop -'

'What about him?' asked Andy.

'He gave the shop assistant a €20 note. The forged €20 note,' answered Mary.

'You don't know that,' said Andy.

'Yes, I do,' replied Mary. 'He said, "This is all I've got" or something like that.'

Andy said nothing.

'And he's a fat man, with a green shirt,' said Mary. 'And the shirt was too small. I saw his stomach.'

'Yuk!' said Mary and Andy at the same time. They laughed.

Then Andy said, 'OK. The forged note came from a man in a green shirt, but... how many people are there in Dublin? You're not going to find him.'

'You're right,' replied Mary. She looked angry again. 'There are lots of people - but I'd like to find him.'

Andy gave her a funny look and turned the television back on.

At a quarter to five Mary asked, 'Are you coming to the cinema, Andy? Come on. The film's got some very good actors in it.'

'Oh! All right,' said Andy and turned off the television. 'Anyway, who are these very good actors?'

They went down to the hotel restaurant and Mary told Andy a little about the film. Mary stopped near the restaurant. She put her hand on Andy's arm.

'Stop!' she said. 'Look!'

At the front of the hotel was a fat man in a green shirt.

'That's him,' said Mary quietly. 'Mr Green Shirt.'

Mr Green Shirt had a big box in his hands. He gave the box to the hotel receptionist and said something. The receptionist replied. Andy and Mary tried to listen to the conversation, but they were too far away. Then Mr Green Shirt turned and left the hotel.

'Come on!' said Mary. 'Were going after him.'

'We can't!' replied Andy. 'We're going to the cinema.'

'Not now,' said Mary. She took him by the hand. 'Come on!'

'Sometimes I don't understand my sister,' thought Andy. But he ran out of the hotel with her.

CHAPTER THREE

Going after Mr Green Shirt

Out on the street they stopped and watched the man in the green shirt walking away.

'Miss O'Brien's going to be angry,' said Andy.

'Not everyone's going to the film,' replied Mary.

'But she thinks you are,' said Andy.

'Forget about Miss O'Brien,' said Mary. 'This is important.'

Mary watched the man. He turned right. Andy and Mary ran after him and turned right too.

'Don't get too near him,' said Mary. 'We don't want him to see us.'

For ten minutes, they walked about fifty metres behind the man. First, there was Trinity College on their left, then the National Gallery on their right.

Next came Merrion Square. There were houses round the square, and trees and gardens in it.

The man walked up to the front door of a house, opened the door and went in.

'OK,' said Andy. 'We can go back now. We've still got time to get to the cinema. The film actually starts at half past five.'

'No,' said Mary and took him by the arm. 'We're going to wait in the gardens.'

'Why?' asked Andy. 'We can't see him.'

'But what's he doing there?' asked Mary. 'I want to know.'

Andy was angry, but he didn't say anything. 'I can't leave my sister here,' he thought. They waited and they waited. After thirty minutes Andy said, 'Come on, Mary. He's not coming out again.'

'Just five more minutes,' said Mary. 'Please, Andy.' Andy started to speak but just then the front door opened and Mr Green Shirt came out. He walked into the gardens.

'Here he comes,' said Mary. Then she saw the look on the man's face. 'Oh no!' she said. 'He's coming over here. And he's angry.'

The man started to run.

'Who are you?' he shouted. 'I saw you behind me. Why are you watching me?'

'Run,' said Mary. And she and Andy turned and started running. Mr Green Shirt ran after them.

'Stop!' he shouted. But they didn't. At the end of the gardens, Mary saw a man in a green and red jacket sitting on a big stone. She ran up to him.

'Can you help -' she started to say, but then she stopped.

Andy took her arm. 'Come on!' he said. 'That's not a real person, stupid. That's a statue of the famous Irish writer, Oscar Wilde. There's a picture of it in the hotel.'

They started running again. Mr Green Shirt was behind them, but he wasn't very fast.

'Don't stop,' said Andy. They ran out of the gardens and down the street.

After two or three minutes, they stopped and looked back. Mr Green Shirt wasn't there. Andy looked at Mary. She looked afraid.

'It's all right,' said Andy. He put his arm round her. 'He's much too slow.'

Andy smiled at his sister.

'Come on,' he said. 'We must go and tell Miss O'Brien.'

CHAPTER FOUR

A taxi to the police station

Miss O'Brien came back from the cinema at half past seven. Mary and Andy went to see her in her room.

'Where were you, Mary?' asked Miss O'Brien. She looked a little angry. 'Why didn't you come to the cinema with us?'

'I'm very sorry, Miss O'Brien,' said Mary, 'but we've got something to tell you.'

'Well?' asked Miss O'Brien. She didn't smile. 'Tell me.'

First Mary told Miss O'Brien about Mr Green Shirt in the Trinity College shop. Then she told her about the house in Merrion Square, and about him running after them. Miss O'Brien listened to Mary. For a minute or two, she looked at her hands and thought. Then she looked up at Andy and Mary.

'Right,' she said. 'We must go and tell the police about this. I'm going to call a taxi. You go and wait at the front of the hotel. I'm coming down in just a minute.'

'Thank you, Miss O'Brien,' said Mary.

Andy and Mary went down to the front of the hotel. They walked across the street and waited for the taxi.

'Miss O'Brien is nice,' said Mary. 'She didn't actually get angry with us.'

'No, she didn't. But we're here for two more days,' said Andy darkly. 'There's still time.'

Andy and Mary stood and waited. Not many cars drove down Fleet Street. After five minutes, a taxi turned into the street. It stopped just in front of the teenagers.

'This must be our taxi,' said Mary. She walked over to it and opened the back door.

'Is this for Miss O'Brien?' she asked the back of the driver's head.

'That's right,' said the driver.

Mary got into the back. Andy went round the car, got in next to her and closed the door.

'Miss O'Brien is just coming,' said Mary to the driver. She turned and started to say something to Andy, but then saw the look on his face. Andy's eyes were on the driver. Mary looked at the driver too. Then she saw it. Under the driver's brown jacket. A green shirt!

'Out now,' said Andy and tried to open his door. Mary tried her door at the same time. The back doors didn't open, but the front door did and a second man got into the car. He was tall and thin. He wore a blue shirt and black trousers. He looked back at Andy and Mary. He had black hair and a cold smile.

'You can't get out,' he said. 'The doors don't open. And nobody can see in... the windows are dark.'

He turned to Mr Green Shirt. 'Go!' he said. The car started and they drove off.

'What are you doing? Where are you taking us?' asked Mary.

Mr Blue Shirt turned and looked at Mary. He smiled again. His eyes really were cold.

CHAPTER FIVE

A swim in the River Liffey

'Help!' shouted Andy. 'Help!'

Mr Green Shirt turned on the radio. It was loud rock music. Nobody heard their shouts. Mr Blue Shirt turned round again and looked at Andy and Mary. He didn't say anything. He didn't need to. Andy stopped shouting. The man turned back and watched the road. Andy looked out of the window. Nobody looked in. Mr Green Shirt drove across the River Liffey and turned right. There were houses on their left and the river on the right.

'Where are these men taking us?' thought Andy. 'What are they going to do?' He thought of answers to his questions and he didn't like them. These men were bad.

'We need to do something quickly,' thought Andy. But he didn't know what. He looked at Mary. She didn't look afraid.

'The Goodbye Game,' she said.

'What?' thought Andy. 'What is she talking about? Why is she talking about a film?' The Goodbye Game was a film about a French cook and his family. It was a very funny film. But...

Mr Blue Shirt looked round quickly. 'Stop talking,' he said angrily.

Andy looked at Mary again. He didn't understand. What was important about the film? Mary closed her eyes slowly. Then she opened them again.

Of course! Now Andy understood. In the film, the cook is driving down the road with his five-year-old son in the back of the car. The son puts his hands over his father's eyes. The car goes off the road into a tree and all the doors open. The father is very angry but... maybe he and Mary...

It was a dangerous thing to do, but they needed to get away from these men. He looked at Mary and closed one eye. She gave him a little smile. Andy closed his hand. Mary watched his hand. One finger came out, then a second, then a third.

At the same time, Andy put his hands over Mr Green Shirts eyes and Mary put hers over Mr Blue Shirts. The two men shouted. Mr Green Shirt took his hands off the wheel and the car turned fast across the road. The river was now in front of them. Andy and Mary took their hands away quickly. Mr Green Shirt put his hands back on the wheel. But the car was too fast and the river was too close.

'Left! Left!' Mr Blue Shirt shouted. But it was too late. There were shouts and noise in the car and on the street. There was rock music from the CD player. There was more noise, then the sound of the car hitting the water. But the doors didn't open.

CHAPTER SIX

Talking to the police

'Quick! Open the window!' Andy shouted. Quickly he and Mary opened the back windows of the car and started to get out. Water started to come in. Cold water. Lots of it, coming in fast.

The men in the front didn't look round. They too just wanted to get out, but the front doors weren't easy to open. There was too much water.

'Out!' shouted Andy. He and Mary got quickly into the water. They were good swimmers. In minutes, they were out of the water and on the street. Back in the river, the men opened the car doors slowly and started to swim away.

'What happened?' asked people on the street. 'Are you OK? Do you need a doctor?'

There was a seat near the river. Andy and Mary sat down. A woman started to give Mary her coat. A man in a brown coat took out his phone and called the police. Then Andy looked up the street and saw the blue light of a police station.

'There's a police station up there,' he said to Mary. He took her by the hand. 'Come on.' They started running up the street in their wet clothes.

'Hey! Wait!' called the man in the brown coat. 'The police are coming!'

But the teenagers didn't stop. They ran to the police station. The police took away Andy and Mary's wet clothes and gave them some old ones. Then they put the teenagers in a room and gave them some hot tea and biscuits. Two police officers, a man and a woman, came into the room and talked to them. Andy and Mary told them everything.

At ten o'clock, the teenagers were still at the police station. Across the table sat the two officers. The woman, Inspector Helen Forrester, wore a dark blue jacket and trousers and a white shirt. The man, Sergeant Tom Brady, wore a light blue shirt and dark blue trousers.

'We got to the river too late,' Forrester said to Andy and Mary. 'The men in the car got away.' She put some photos on the table in front of her.

'It's late now and I must call your teacher and tell her you're OK. But first I've got some photos.' She turned them over. 'Are any of these the men in the taxi?' she asked.

Andy and Mary started looking at the photos of men's faces.

After a minute or two, Andy took one and gave it to the inspector. 'Here's one,' he said. 'That's the man with the green shirt.'

Then Mary turned a photo round for the inspector to look at. 'And here's Mr Blue Shirt,' she said.

Forrester looked at the photos and gave them to Brady. He looked at them.

'I know these two,' he said with a small smile.

'OK,' said Forrester to the teenagers. 'Now I'm going to call your teacher. What did you say her name was again?'

'O'Brien,' replied Mary. 'Miss O'Brien.'

Brady looked quickly at Forrester. 'Of course,' said Forrester. She thought for a minute. 'And you say she called us about the forged notes on Grafton Street this afternoon?'

'That's right,' replied Mary.

Forrester looked at Brady and then back at Andy and Mary.

'Is something wrong?' asked Andy.

'No, no,' said Forrester. 'There are a lot of O'Briens in Dublin.'

She looked at Brady. 'Sergeant,' she said, 'you get their clothes. I'm going to call Miss O'Brien.' Then she looked at the teenagers. 'And you two, wait here a minute.' The police officers left the room.

Andy looked at Mary. 'Why did she say, "There are a lot of O'Briens in Dublin"?' he asked.

'I don't know,' replied Mary.

CHAPTER SEVEN

A cafe on O'Connell Street

At twenty past ten, Miss O'Brien came into the room at the police station. Forrester and Brady were behind her.

'Oh! Andy, Mary. There you are,' she said and put her arms first round Mary, then round Andy.

'Are you all right? The inspector told me everything.' Forrester spoke, 'OK, you can go now. You get some sleep. We're going to try and find these men.'

Miss O'Brien looked at the teenagers.

'Are you all right?' she asked again.

'Yes,' said Mary, 'I'm OK.'

'I'm hungry,' said Andy.

Miss O'Brien and the police officers laughed. 'Come on!' said Miss O'Brien. 'There's a late night cafe on O'Connell Street. It's only five minutes from here.'

At ten thirty Mary, Andy and Miss O'Brien were in Maguire's Cafe on O'Connell Street. Mary had tea and some biscuits - Andy had milk and cake. Miss O'Brien took her phone out of her bag.

'Well, I'm going to call my brother,' she said. 'No more taxis for us! Fergus can come and get us.'

Miss O'Brien went out of the cafe and made a short phone call. Then she came back in and sat down again.

'Well, then,' Miss O'Brien looked at Andy. 'Did you enjoy seeing the Book of Kells this afternoon, Andy?'

'Yes, I did,' said Andy, laughing, 'but Mary didn't.'

'Andy!' said Mary.

'That's all right,' said Miss O'Brien. 'Not everyone finds it interesting.'

Andy and Mary finished their food and drinks. Then they all stood up and walked to the cafe door. Miss O'Brien opened it.

'That's Fergus's car over there,' she said.

Andy and Mary walked out onto the street. Twenty metres away to the right was a black car. A man in a baseball cap got out. He turned and opened the back door of the car. Someone came up behind them from the left. Then everything happened very fast.

Police officers ran out from everywhere. The man by the car was Mr Blue Shirt. He turned and tried to run, but he was too slow. Two police officers quickly stopped him. The man behind them was Mr Green Shirt. Two police officers took his arms.

Andy looked round for Miss O'Brien. But she was fast. She saw the police and started running up O'Connell Street.

Mr Green Shirt saw this. 'Run, Deirdre, run,' he shouted.

Mary looked at Andy.

'How does Mr Green Shirt know Miss O'Brien?' she asked. Then she understood.

CHAPTER EIGHT

Back at the hotel

Mary shouted 'Quick!' and started running after Miss O'Brien.

Andy was behind Mary. Police officers started running behind Andy and Mary. But the teenagers were fast. Mary got to Miss O'Brien first. She took her right arm.

'Stop!' she shouted. 'Stop!'

Miss O'Brien tried to get away, but Andy took her left arm, and then the police were there. By then it was too late.

At twelve o'clock that night Andy and Mary and Inspector Forrester were back at the hotel.

'I phoned your parents and told them everything,' she said. 'I also spoke to the head of your school. A new teacher is getting to Dublin tomorrow morning. She's going to take you back to England.'

'Thank you,' said Andy. 'But I still don't understand. How did you know about Miss O'Brien?'

'We didn't really,' Forrester started to reply, 'but your Mr Green Shirt is Fergus O'Brien. And we thought there are a lot of O'Briens in Dublin but -'

'But they're from the same family,' finished Mary.

'Yes,' said Forrester. 'Actually, Mr Green Shirt is Fergus, Miss O'Brien's brother. And Mr Blue Shirt, he's Patrick Donnelly, a friend of theirs. Donnelly and O'Brien make forged notes and Deirdre O'Brien, your teacher, helps them change forged notes for real money. You saw her brother at work. He buys something cheap with a forged note and gets real money back.'

'How do you know she helps him?' asked Andy.

'Well, we know that she never called us about your forged €20 note. Also her brother left a box here at the hotel for her this afternoon,' said Forrester. 'You told us about that.'

'That's right,' said Mary.

'Well, we found it in her room,' said Forrester. 'There was €20,000 in it. In €20 and €50 notes.'

Andy and Mary looked at Forrester, their mouths open.

Then Andy asked, 'But Mr Green Shirt and Mr Blue Shirt? How did they know about us and about the hotel?'

'Miss O'Brien phoned them,' said Forrester. 'She told them to come in a taxi and take you away. Her brother Fergus sometimes works for Grafton's Taxis.'

'What did they want to do with us?' asked Mary.

Forrester stood up.

'I think it's time for bed,' she said, 'It's after twelve o'clock.'

Andy and Mary stood up too.

'Yes,' said Mary. 'I'm tired.'

'Me too,' said Andy.

Forrester looked at them. 'Your teachers getting here at eleven o'clock tomorrow morning,' said Forrester. 'What are you going to do before that? Why don't you go and see the Book of Kells?'

'We saw that today,' said Andy quickly, his eyes laughing at Mary. 'It was beautiful, wasn't it Mary?'

Forrester saw the look on Andy's face. 'I see,' she said. She smiled too. 'You didn't like it much then, Mary.'

'No,' she said. 'I didn't. And I lost 20 euros when I went there!'

- THE END -