I

May 1960

This was it!

Kate Freeman stood on the pavement in Fleet Street and gazed at the building in front of her. She was nervous, but at the same time so elated that she couldn't stop smiling. The *World Explorer* was a newspaper renowned for its foreign coverage and respected for the way it presented the news without the sensationalism that you saw so much of these days. She'd wanted to be a part of it for some time. And this was the day the dream was about to come true.

She had arrived early and intended to savour the moment, so she turned in a slow circle to look up and down the busy street.

'Are you lost?'

Kate grinned at the middle-aged man who had stopped to see if she needed help. 'Oh, no, I know *exactly* where I am!'

'Good for you.' He gave a rueful smile at her obvious excitement and continued walking, lifting his hand in a wave as he disappeared into the crowd.

She felt like doing a little jig of delight but managed to resist the temptation and retain her dignity in the crowded street. It was still hard to believe she had actually got the job, but she had the letter in her bag to prove it.

She was about to become a photographer for the *World Explorer*!

With one more glance at the gold lettering over the door, Kate walked into the foyer and up to the front desk.

'Hello, I'm Kate Freeman and I'm starting work here today.'

The receptionist gave her a friendly smile. 'Take a seat, Miss Freeman, someone will be right down for you.'

She was too nervous to sit, so she wandered around the foyer, examining the many photographs on the walls. They were good – very good – and she hoped to be as expert herself one day. Photography was her passion, but she was well aware that she still had a lot to learn. And this was the place to do it!

She looked up to see a man in his early thirties striding towards her with a smile on his face.

'You must be Miss Freeman.' He shook her hand. 'I'm Terry Jenkins, the paper's senior photographer, and you'll be working with me.'

'Please call me Kate.' He was tall and reed-thin, with brown hair and wide-set grey eyes. She liked him at once and hoped everyone was going to be this friendly.

He glanced at the bag on her shoulder as they walked to the lift. 'I see you've brought your own camera. May I have a look at it?'

She handed it over when they reached the next floor, and, while he examined it, she glanced down the long room to the office at the end where she'd had her interview. She could see through the windows that it was empty, and she was relieved about that; she wasn't sure she liked the man who had interviewed her.

'That's a beauty, a top-of-the-range Leica. They'll give

you one here, but it won't be as good as this.' He gave the camera back to her.

'My parents bought it for me when I left college.'

'A lovely gift.' Terry studied her carefully. 'And what have you been doing since then?'

Kate's smile was wide. 'You mean do I have any experience?'

'Well, the chief hasn't told me much about you,' Terry admitted.

'Ah.' That didn't surprise Kate. Andrew Stevenson had been quite hostile during the interview, so it had come as a complete surprise when she'd received a letter saying she'd got the job. 'In that case I'd better explain. I'm twenty-three years old. After taking a course in graphic design at art college, I worked for a professional photographer for a year, and then spent another year on a local newspaper.'

'And what do you hope to achieve now you're working for us?' Terry leant on the edge of a desk and folded his arms, obviously wanting to find out as much as he could about her.

Kate became serious. 'I've been very lucky in my life, with a wonderful family around me. I would like to try and help those who are less fortunate than myself. This is supposed to be a time of peace, but there's still too much fighting going on, and it's the ordinary citizens of those countries who are suffering. Pictures can be very powerful, and I'd like the chance to bring their plight to everyone's notice.'

'A woman with passion.' Terry pushed himself upright and smiled. 'Welcome to the *Explorer*, Kate Freeman. I think it's going to be interesting to work with you.'

'My mother says that if you want something bad enough, you've got to get off your backside and fight for it.' Kate gave a quiet chuckle. 'If you want to meet someone with real passion and determination, then you ought to meet my mother, Rose Freeman.'

'You must introduce me one day.' Terry led her to the far end of the office. 'Come on, I'll show you the darkroom we use.'

He took her to a well-equipped but untidy room. 'You'll be doing mostly developing and printing at first, but you'll soon be given assignments. We're in desperate need of another photographer.'

'I know I'll have to start at the bottom,' she told him. She was aware that she was going to have to prove herself, but failure was not something Kate was prepared to contemplate. From her mother, Rose, Kate had inherited not only her dark hair and eyes but also a desire to uncover injustice and suffering, and this was something she took very seriously.

'There's a pile of films there with instructions for what is needed in the way of prints. Start on those and I'll come and help you later. Then I'll introduce you to everyone, and we'll grab some lunch.'

Kate sang the Elvis song 'It's Now or Never' as she worked. In her darkroom at home she had a gramophone and a stack of the latest records, but she would have to make her own music here. She loved her own darkroom. It was a place she could spend hours experimenting with printing techniques, and very often her mother had to thump on the door to make her come out to eat. Time meant nothing to her when she was immersed in her passion, photography. When her brother, James, had told

them two years ago that he was buying a house on Richmond Green, Kate had immediately claimed his room; and, with her father's help, she soon had a lovely place to work in at home.

Her easy laugh echoed around the *Explorer*'s darkroom as she remembered her brother's protest that she couldn't wait to get rid of him. That wasn't true, of course, but he had always teased her. He would still ruffle her hair and call her a stubborn, weird kid. But she didn't agree with that, preferring to think of herself as determined!

She was happy and the time passed quickly.

'You sound bright.' Terry came to find her a couple of hours later and pulled the curtain back in place. 'How have you been getting on?'

Kate grinned at him in the gloom of the developing light. 'I'm thrilled to have been given this chance.'

'There's no accounting for tastes.' Terry shook his head ruefully. 'You'll be worked like a slave, and the Chief, Andrew Stevenson, isn't the easiest of men. His temper can be volcanic.'

'He interviewed me and wasn't very friendly, so I was staggered when I received the letter telling me I'd got the job.'

Terry studied her thoughtfully. 'To be honest, so am I. He's anti-women and says he doesn't like them littering up the newsroom.'

'I'll have to be careful, then.' Kate pulled a face, knowing that was going to be difficult for her. Although she thought things through carefully before taking any action, once she had made her mind up she wouldn't budge. Her mother said she had a stubborn streak a mile wide. Kate smiled to herself as she remembered the

tussles they'd had while she'd been growing up, but she'd always been encouraged to speak her mind by her parents and she was incredibly grateful to them for that.

'You know your job; this is excellent work.'

She was relieved Terry approved. That was a good start, but she was going to have to watch her step around Mr Stevenson and try not to upset him, because if she did she'd be out. And that thought might curb her tongue because she wanted this job quite desperately.

Terry switched on the main light. 'Leave the rest, Kate. Most of the staff are in now, and I'll introduce you before we have some lunch.'

I'll never remember every name, she thought, as she went from desk to desk. They were all men except for the woman on the switchboard, and that made her appointment even more puzzling. She hoped she was a competent photographer with some artistic flair, but she still had a way to go before she became as good as she intended to be. But this was a step in the right direction, and she'd learn a lot here.

She listened to the banter in the busy newsroom with a smile on her face. After Terry had made the introductions, some of the men had gathered round her, and she didn't miss the gleam of appreciation in their eyes. Without being vain, she knew she was pretty – beautiful some people said – but in her eyes there was only one real beauty in her family, and that was her mother.

Her gaze swept around the newsroom again, looking for one person, but it was unlikely she'd recognize him anyway, because the only picture she'd seen of him had been a grainy newspaper one. He was the *Explorer*'s most-

respected war correspondent, and she had followed his career avidly. She devoured his regular reports from many of the world's trouble spots. If there was a war or uprising anywhere, Jon Devlin would be there. He had a wonderful way with words, and you got the impression that he really cared for the people he was writing about. How she'd love to do something like that one day.

'Is there any chance of meeting Mr Devlin? Or is he still abroad somewhere?' she asked when the introductions were over.

'Jon – what on earth do you want to meet him for?' A reporter named Mike Bowles snorted in disgust, but couldn't hide his smile.

In fact everyone was grinning. She glanced back at Terry, puzzled. 'He's a marvellous reporter.'

'Can't deny that, but he's an unreliable sod.' Terry pulled a face. 'Excuse my language.'

'Don't worry about that,' she said, laughing. 'I've heard worse when my mother's annoyed. So what's he done?'

Mike perched on the edge of his desk, eyes glinting with amusement. 'He was supposed to get married last week. We were all at St George's Church in Mayfair, wearing our best suits. Terry had set everything up for the photographs, and Jon never turned up.'

'Where was he?' She could picture the scene and felt sorry for the poor bride. What a terrible thing to happen.

'Still in the Congo. A note arrived an hour before the wedding to say that he couldn't get back.' Mike shook his head, obviously still amused.

In that case Kate was prepared to give him the benefit of the doubt. 'Things are very tense out there – '

'Nah. If you ask me he got cold feet. I bet that's the first sign of cowardice he's ever shown.'

Terry was nodding. 'The only thing that frightens Devlin is commitment, and one thing's for sure, Jane – that's his fiancée – has finished with him. The message came just in time or she'd have been left at the altar. She's not the kind of girl to stand for that.'

Everyone in the newsroom had an opinion to venture, and they were still chatting a few minutes later.

When a voice spoke from behind her, the men dived for their desks, and Kate was left standing alone in the middle of the room.

'So you've arrived, then.'

Kate turned round with a bright smile and looked into the glowering face of Andrew Stevenson, editor of the *Explorer*. 'Yes, sir, and I'm looking forward to working here.'

His expression was one of contempt as he spun on his heel and started to walk away, calling over his shoulder to Terry, 'Keep a sharp eye on her. Damned woman!'

Kate was stunned by his rudeness. As silence reigned in the newsroom, she watched his retreating figure until he reached his office, slamming the door so hard she expected the glass to shatter. She gave Terry a startled look. 'I haven't been here long enough to do anything wrong, so what's he going to be like if I do make a mistake?'

'If I were you,' he said with a puzzled frown, 'I wouldn't want to find out.'

'Do you have to replace the glass in his door very often?' she asked, making a joke of the episode, deter-

mined not to let one man spoil her pleasure in her new job.

'He never usually closes it.' Terry guided her out of the office.

'Oh, dear, I don't like the sound of that.' She shrugged as if shaking off something unpleasant, that remark about 'damned woman' had sounded personal, as if he were talking just about her and not about his dislike of women in general. That thought was quickly dismissed. She was imagining things; he'd employed her. So perhaps he was in a *very* bad mood today? She smiled at Terry. 'Where do we have lunch? I'm starving.'

'In the Hare and Hounds just down the road.'

Lunch consisted of a ham sandwich and half a pint of beer with Terry and the reporter Mike Bowles. They were easy going, and Kate really enjoyed their company. After they wandered back to the office, Kate finished the printing, studying each picture carefully to see what kind of thing the paper was looking for. Of course she did this every day when the newspaper was delivered to their house, but it would be interesting to see what was used and what was rejected.

She was clearing up when there was a tap on the door and Mike looked in. 'Bring your camera,' he ordered. 'There's trouble in Charing Cross Road.'

Kate hurried after him and only just managed to shut the car door as Mike roared off along the road. She held on to the dashboard in alarm. Her father had taught her to drive last year, but he was a placid man and drove in a calm and controlled way. This was unbelievable: Mike was driving like a maniac.

He gave her a quick glance. 'Don't look so scared. If we don't get there soon, the action will be all over.'

'We'll be making headlines ourselves,' she muttered under her breath, 'if you drive like this.'

Mike didn't seem at all put out by her concern and accelerated as a gap appeared in the traffic. They arrived just as the crowds were dispersing. 'Damn, looks like we're too late, but shoot off a few pictures anyway,' he said, jumping out of the car and hurrying off to see what it had been about.

Kate followed and began taking pictures of Mike talking to a group of people and a policeman, who seemed to be the focus of everyone's anger. She snapped away. This was her first job, and it was hard to contain her excitement.

Mike made his way back, tucking his notebook into his pocket. 'Don't waste your film, Kate, there isn't much of a story here.'

'What was it about?' she asked.

'It was a protest about the introduction of traffic wardens in September. Can't say I blame them.'

She knew that the proposed system for penalizing motorists for illegal parking in London was not popular. They went back to the newsroom without a story, but Kate didn't mind. She'd been taken out on a job on her first day and even got to take some pictures. That promised well for the future.

Later that evening, Kate, sitting on the train home, felt tired, but she was bursting to tell her parents about her first day on the paper. She watched the passing scenery with a smile on her face. Her father had designed two

houses in Roehampton for the Freemans, Kate's family, and the Websters, her mother's family, to live in. Her smile spread as she remembered him telling her how he'd had them built before he'd managed to persuade her mother to marry him. Rose Webster, as she had been then, had been driven by the desire to get her family out of the slums of London, believing that education was the key to open the door to a better life. Through great hardship and determination she had managed to go to university and become a solicitor. After that she had fought for a better deal for women, for improved housing and for anyone suffering injustice. Kate knew what a special woman her mother was. Although she no longer worked as a solicitor, having retired from business five years ago, Rose Freeman was still battling with injustice wherever she found it. And woe betide anyone who got in her way!

'She only has to fix her dark gaze on any man to make him want to run for cover,' Kate's father had told her, his gentle eyes sparkling with respect and amusement.

Ah, how she loved them both. But it was her father who had an extra special place in her heart. The second she'd been born, her mother told her, she'd looked at her dad, and the bond had been forged at that moment.

The train arrived at Roehampton and Kate got out, her mind still mulling over the memories as she walked home. She considered herself one of the luckiest people she knew, for her family was the most important thing in her life. The things they had all done were incredible. Was it any wonder she was so proud of them!

Their charming Roehampton house was detached with bay windows in the front, and so full of love it was

a joy to walk into. They hardly ever used the front door, so Kate walked up the path to the side gate and into the well-kept garden at the rear. As soon as she entered the kitchen, her parents, who were longing to hear about her first day, greeted her. Her mother had timed the meal just right, and it was being dished up just as she was removing her coat.

'How did you get on today?' her mother asked, as they sat down to eat.

Kate explained every detail of the work she'd been asked to do, waving her arms as she excitedly told them about being taken out by Mike on her first day. She rolled her eyes. 'You ought to see the way he drives!'

'You've worked hard for this chance and you'll make a success of it,' her father said. 'Won't she, Rose?'

Kate leaned forward and spoke with passion. 'If I can prove to the paper that I'm a good photographer, then they might send me abroad to some of the trouble spots. The world needs to be shown tragedies like the Sharpeville massacre in South Africa last March. There's a revolt going on in Algeria that is only going to get worse. The Belgian Congo is unstable.' She ground to a halt when she noticed her father's pained expression. 'There's so much happening. Pictures can be very powerful, and I'd like the chance to do something useful.'

Her father's sigh was heartfelt. 'I thought having one crusader in the family was enough. I still can't stop your mother getting involved in every worthy cause.'

Rose laughed. 'You're exaggerating, Bill, I'm not taking on quite so much these days.'

'Really? I hadn't noticed.' Bill's tone was amused, but the look he gave his wife was one of pure love and respect.

Kate took hold of her father's hand and smiled wryly. 'It's in the blood, I'm afraid.'

'I know,' he said with a resigned tone, 'but this is a great time for you youngsters. You've got a freedom undreamt of in our youth, so enjoy it.'

'I'm going to,' she laughed, wrapping her arms around his neck and kissing his cheek affectionately. 'Chris Barber and his jazz band are at the Hammersmith Palais all this week. I'm going with Beth tonight.'

Rose chuckled. 'Who might they be?'

'They're the top jazz band,' said Kate.

Bill smiled at his daughter. 'Your mother was obsessive about work, and I don't want to see you doing the same thing. Have a good time, relax and enjoy yourself.'

'I will,' Kate assured her father, smiling fondly at him.

'How's Beth?' her mother asked. 'We haven't seen her for a while.'

'That's because she's found herself a steady boyfriend, but we still meet up a couple of times a week, even if it's only for a quick gossip in a coffee bar.' She stood up. 'Thanks for a lovely supper, Mum. Now I must get ready.'

After a quick bath, Kate rummaged through her wardrobe for something to wear. She really ought to go out shopping for some of the latest fashions, but she'd never been interested in following the trends. She pulled out a red dress with a slash neck and full gathered skirt. That would have to do, but she knew that Beth would say the skirt was too long. They had met at art college, and, although they were complete opposites, they soon became firm friends. Beth Upton was short with fair hair and baby blue eyes; Kate was quite tall with black hair and dark brown eyes. Her friend was bubbly and excitable;

Kate was quieter, more thoughtful. Beth had always been interested in fashion and was now working as an assistant window dresser in a trendy shop in Kensington, but Kate had wanted to be a photographer for as long as she could remember.

After a final brush of her hair and a touch of lipstick, she called to let her parents know she was leaving, and set off for Hammersmith, looking forward to an evening of good music and laughter.

2

Over the next few weeks, Kate discovered that the newsroom, with its constantly changing moods, was an exciting place to work. At times it was quiet, almost peaceful; and at others noisy, frantic. It was the frantic times she watched in fascination, wondering how a newspaper was ever produced from such chaos and uproar. She couldn't help being sorry for the errand boy, Pete, as he tried to cope with voices shouting at him from all directions. He ran from place to place, his dark greasy hair falling into his eyes and his face red from the exertion. When she had time herself, she would pitch in and help him, receiving a smile of gratitude from him.

Kate learnt a lot from Terry, who had taken her with him a few times. She was now going out with a couple of the reporters on a regular basis, and she loved the work.

The man who had interviewed her, Mr Stevenson, was still making his dislike of her plain. It was almost as if he could hardly bear to speak to her, but it didn't bother Kate. His hostility towards her was puzzling, but she was not one to let a thing like that upset her. Everything was going well, and she was happy. They'd used a few of her photographs, and she had been praised for their quality. It was all very encouraging.

'Quick!' Mike peered around the door of the darkroom

one sunny Tuesday morning. 'We've got a student demonstration at Marble Arch.'

Kate grabbed her camera and tore after him; she was in for another hair-raising ride, but she kept her eyes shut most of the time now and, thankfully, the journeys were always short.

They couldn't get close because of the police and crowds, so Mike left the car and they ran towards the noisy gathering of about 200 scruffy and boisterous girls and boys. They were all shouting and yelling, making it difficult to understand what they were saying.

'What's this all about?' Kate gasped, as they pushed their way to the front. She followed Mike as he skirted around the police cordon until he was right in front of the students.

'They're demanding independence for the Belgian Congo and all other countries under oppression.' He gave her a sideways grin. 'This is right up your street. Can't you hear what they're shouting? This is a time of peace. Peace for everyone!'

Kate didn't answer; she was too busy taking pictures. She'd never made a secret of her views on world affairs. Everyone at the paper was friendly towards her – except for one of course – and they often had lively discussions. They had included her from the very beginning, which had surprised her. The paper was a man's world, so she felt privileged to be asked to join them after work. The Hare and Hounds was their favourite haunt. Terry didn't often stay behind for a drink, as he was newly married and eager to get home, but Mike was always there. He was around forty, Kate guessed, not married, which she thought a shame because he was a really nice man. He

had a sharp sense of humour and was a good, dedicated reporter. He wasn't bad-looking either, with dark hair and hazel eyes.

Mike tugged her arm. 'That's enough. Things are getting out of hand and we'd better get behind the police lines for safety.'

She continued taking pictures until Mike dragged her to the other side of the police cordon. They had just made it when the crowd surged forward. She was still snapping away as fast as she could. These were going to be the best action pictures she'd ever taken.

'Run!' Mike yelled at her, as she continued to stand there with the camera up to her eye.

He pulled her urgently, and, after one more photo, she turned, then tripped and fell flat. As the crowd rushed over her, yelling at the top of their voices, she curled into a tight ball to protect herself and her camera from what seemed like hundreds of feet thudding around her.

When the crowd had passed, she opened her eyes and was horrified to see Mike on the ground, blood running down his face. She scrambled over to him. 'Are you all right?'

He gave a groan and sat up, flexing his arms and legs to see if anything was broken. 'Why the hell didn't you run when I told you? We could have been killed.'

A policeman came and helped them up. 'You'd better be off to hospital,' he told Mike, 'you might need stitches in that gash. Charing Cross will be your best bet. Are you hurt, miss?'

'I'm all right, I think.' A sharp pain shot through her foot. 'I've twisted my ankle, that's all.'

'Better have that seen to as well, then.' He gave her a

stern look. 'And next time don't get so close. You never can tell what a crowd is going to do, even if it does appear to be good-natured.'

She helped Mike to the car and insisted on driving, even though her foot was throbbing badly. 'I'm so sorry,' she apologized, feeling upset that she'd been the cause of his injury.

'Didn't you see they were turning nasty?' He groaned as they went over a bump. 'I couldn't believe it when you stayed there taking your damned photos.'

'When I'm looking through a viewfinder I'm oblivious to everything else,' she admitted.

Mike remained silent with his eyes closed as they drove through the hospital gates. The Accident and Emergency Department was crowded. They weren't the only people who'd been injured that day, but they were seen quickly and she led Mike back to the car an hour later. He'd had three stitches in his head; she'd had her ankle bound up.

'Do you want to go home and rest?' she asked.

'No, better take me back to the paper. I've still got a story to get out. I hope your photos are brilliant, after all the trouble they've cost us.'

Kate hoped so too. She gave him a sideways glance and was pleased to see him looking better. She was dreadfully upset about this incident, and decided there and then that she would have to be more careful in the future. It wasn't going to do her career much good if she gained a reputation for being reckless. 'I couldn't help it, Mike, I tripped over something or someone.'

'Don't worry about it, Kate.' He dredged up a smile, obviously trying to make light of his injuries. 'No great harm done, eh?'

She chewed her lip and worried. Mike had always been so kind to her, treating her as an equal, regardless of her sex. She was so upset that he had been hurt because of her. The policeman had been mild with his censure, but she knew it would be a different story back at the paper. Now Mr Stevenson really had something to shout at her about!

They had been back for half an hour, and Mike had been in with Andrew Stevenson the whole time. Kate waited in trepidation, knowing she was in real trouble. When Mike finally walked out of the Chief's office, he lifted his hands in a helpless gesture.

'Sorry, Kate, I tried to tell him it was an accident.'

'Kate!'

She winced at the bellow from Andrew Stevenson. After today's débâcle, she knew she would be lucky to keep her job. Bracing herself, she walked into his office.

'Yes, sir.'

The expression on his face did not augur well for her. He was furious. 'Haven't you learnt anything over the last two months? What the hell did you think you were doing out there today?' he exploded.

'Taking pictures, sir.' Kate groaned inwardly for that unguarded remark. She really must be careful what she said, because she wanted to keep this job very much.

The Chief stood up with a growl of irritation. 'Don't you act the innocent with me. You know damned well what I'm talking about. Mike Bowles has been hurt trying to rescue you. He's a reporter with twenty years' experience, and when he told you to run, you should have run.'

Kate desperately wanted to defend herself but didn't dare, so she remained silent as the tirade continued, although she almost bit her tongue with the effort.

'You are there to assist a reporter. How can Mike, or anyone else, do their job if they're worried for your safety?'

'I'm sorry, sir. I tripped and fell – '

'I don't want to hear your excuses! You left it too late and now Mike's hurt.'

She was finding it difficult to keep the words from spilling out and shifted painfully on her twisted ankle. It had been a group of boisterous students, and when they'd burst through the police lines nothing could stop them. They hadn't meant to hurt her or Mike, she was sure of that. It was a struggle not to explain what had happened, but she was wise enough to know that her future was at stake, and the Chief wasn't interested in what *she* had to say. He hadn't even asked her if she had been hurt in the scramble.

His eyes narrowed. 'You wanted to say something?'

She paused for a fraction of a second, and then shook her head. 'No, sir.'

He grunted. 'Very wise of you.'

Kate had never been in the habit of keeping her opinions to herself, but nor was she a fool. There was a time to speak and a time to remain silent – and this was a time to keep her mouth shut.

'I should never have employed a woman photographer.'

That was something Kate had not been able to work out. He obviously didn't like women around and he never missed a chance to demean her. But this time she could

understand his anger. She *had* left it rather late to run. Yet if she hadn't tripped they would have got away, she was sure. It had been an accident, and it looked as if it were going to cost her this job. All the studying and planning were going to be for nothing. She could get another position, of course, but this was the one she wanted. She was so happy here.

'I'm consigning you to the fashion pages from now on, but this is the only chance you're going to get. One more mistake and you're out! Is that understood?'

Kate tried not to show how upset she was. Working on the fashion section was the last thing she wanted to do, but he hadn't dismissed her, and that was a relief. If she did her job well, then she would probably be able to work her way back . . .

'Well, is it?' he thundered when she didn't answer.

'Yes, sir.'

'Right, and take Pete Sheldon with you. I don't know what to do with him. He's always tripping over his own feet and everyone else's, so you should suit each other. Now go and develop your photos and let's see if you've got anything worth using.' He glowered at her. 'That's if you haven't smashed the camera as well.'

'No, sir, it's undamaged.'

'You're lucky, then, because you would have had to replace it at your own expense.'

'It's my own camera,' she pointed out, keeping her voice quiet.

'Why are you using your own equipment? Have you lost our camera?'

'No, it's in the darkroom, but mine's a better one, and I prefer to use that.' She turned and walked out before

he had time to respond to that piece of information. It was an effort not to limp but she was determined to walk properly.

It was only when she had closed the door of the darkroom behind her that she allowed her frustration to show. She hobbled up and down the small room. *The fashion pages!* She couldn't imagine anything more boring – a complete waste of time! How the blazes was she going to learn anything doing that! But it was no use raging about it; this was only a temporary setback. However, that assurance didn't ease her anger for acting so foolishly; she *had* been in the wrong, there was no getting away from that.

She flicked on the DO NOT ENTER light outside and gave vent to her anger and humiliation by using some of her mother's repertoire of swear words. If this job hadn't been so important to her she would have handed in her notice right then, but she didn't want to leave and so had allowed the Chief to shout like that. It had been loud enough for everyone in the newsroom to hear, and she hadn't missed the smirks as she'd come out of his office. In this instance she had deserved a telling-off, but that still didn't excuse the Chief bawling her out in public.

Kate ground her teeth and wondered how her mother would have handled it. That thought brought a fleeting smile to her face. Andrew Stevenson would now be nursing a black eye, or worse, if he'd tried that with Rose Freeman. But although Kate had inherited her mother's dark looks, and the same determination, she was different in temperament. Her mother stormed in to put right an injustice; Kate would achieve her aims in a quieter way. She would wait for the right time.

Putting on the red light, she started to work on the pictures she'd taken today. Kate Freeman never balked at a challenge, and she wasn't going to let today put her off.

As the pictures came to life in the developing tray, she could see they were good, and she felt a twinge of pleasure. She chose two of the best and took them back to Andrew Stevenson.

'Are these any good?' she asked, holding them up for him to see. 'Don't touch, they're still wet.'

After examining them carefully he nodded. 'Give them both to Mike and he can include them with his report, if he wants to.'

Without another word, Kate went over to the reporter's desk. 'The Chief said you might want to use these.'

Mike took the nearly dry prints from her and laid them carefully on his desk. 'Thanks, these are excellent, Kate. Almost worth it!'

She gave him a tight smile and apologized once again. 'I'm sorry about this afternoon.'

He grimaced and rubbed his right arm. 'A few bruises. I think the student who jumped on me was wearing hob-nailed boots, but the head feels better. Are you all right?'

'I'm fine.' Everyone in the room was staring at her, knowing she'd had a severe telling-off, and Mike looked as if he were going to prolong the conversation. Her feelings were raw at the moment, so she beckoned to Pete and took him to her darkroom, relieved to get away from the censure she could see in their faces. Because of her, one of their colleagues could have been seriously injured.

*

Kate's mood lifted on her way home that evening. Her father was retiring today, and they were going to have a huge party. For the last two years they'd been urging him to stop work, and now, at sixty-seven, he'd finally been made to see sense. Her brother, James, was more than capable of taking control of Grant Phillips, their building firm business. At six foot two, James was almost as tall as their father, with his quiet nature too, while both the Freeman children had inherited their mother's dark hair and eyes.

She was delighted to see that her Aunt Annie and Uncle Reid had already arrived, and hugged them enthusiastically. They lived in Thatcham, Berkshire, and she didn't see nearly enough of them. 'Are you staying long?'

'Just for tonight,' Annie told her. 'We're leaving for France in the morning for a holiday and then we're going to stay with Sam and his family for a few days.'

'Oh, lucky you.' Sam, Maria and their son, Jacques, were as close as family to the Freemans. They had met during the war, when Annie had been working with the Frenchman. He had escaped to Britain when France had been invaded, believing his family had been killed. Against all the odds he had found Jacques first, bringing him back for Rose to look after, and then Maria. They had been firm friends ever since. Kate grinned. 'Give Jacques my love.'

'You sure you want us to do that?' Reid didn't hide his amusement. 'He's loved you ever since he arrived in this country during the war.'

A moment of sadness clouded Kate's eyes as she remembered Sam's traumatized little boy, who had been