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职场英语阅读第一书

# 巴西惊魂

## Meet Me in Brazil

Julie Woodward 著

熊冰岷 译



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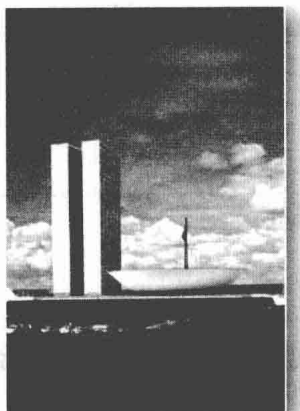
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# Chapter 1

## A strange welcome

**Skim read the chapter once.**

- How many men meet Mike?
- What does Mike drink?
- How does Mike leave the airport?

Curitiba, southern Brazil

Monday 31st October, 7 p.m. local time

He carried his suitcases through the exit gate and looked around. Standing among the people waiting he saw two smartly dressed men, one holding a small sign with his name on it:

**MIKE CARRINGTON**

Happy to see his colleagues waiting for him after such a long flight, he introduced himself.

“I’m Mike Carrington; pleased to meet you,” he said, shaking their hands.

“Paulo Madeiros. Pleased to meet you, too,” said the shorter man. “Welcome to Curitiba. Let me introduce you to my colleague, Mauricio Rotella.”

*That’s strange, Mike thought to himself, I thought I was being met at the airport by Mrs Ribeiro. Obviously there has been a change.*

"Come this way, Mike." Mauricio was walking quickly. "We have a car waiting at the entrance. Let me help you with your luggage."

As they walked quickly outside, Mike didn't notice the man behind him. A tall, slim man with a beard and sunglasses was observing the people around him. Mike hadn't noticed him on the plane either. Outside there was an enormous black saloon car with dark windows.

"Bom dia," Mike greeted the driver as he got in.

Mike was looking forward to practising his Portuguese even though he had only just started to learn. The driver remained silent.

*My pronunciation must be bad!* Mike laughed to himself.

"Here, have a coffee," suggested Paulo, opening a thermos. "It'll wake you up before we arrive."

"Mmm, that's just what I need. Is the hotel far?"

"Oh no, you'll be there before you know it," laughed Paulo.

Mike drank his coffee. It was black, very strong and with a lot of sugar, just the way the Brazilians like it. *I think I would prefer a cup of tea*, Mike thought.

The car pulled away. As Mike looked out of the window he saw a tall, dark man staring at their car. The man seemed very angry about something. Mike didn't know it, but he would see this man again.

The car drove fast towards a city with many high-rise



buildings. Then something strange happened. Mauricio and Paulo were speaking to him but their voices became quieter and quieter. Mike felt strange. Now, he couldn't see very well.

He felt sick. He tried to speak but he couldn't. Mike's head was hurting. Mauricio's face was close to his and he was laughing. Then everything went black... black and silent.

## Chapter 2

# Promoted!

**Skim read the chapter once.**

- Who telephones Mike?
- Where is Mike going on his business trip?
- What language does Mike need to learn?

London

**Monday 17th October**

Two weeks ago, Mike Carrington's day began in the usual way. He arrived at work at the normal time of 8.30 a.m. and switched on his computer. While he was drinking his coffee he read through his emails. It was just another typical Monday morning. Mike was just about to check the points on the agenda for the staff meeting when suddenly his phone rang.

On the phone's screen was the name Eric Randall, 3698. This was the name and number of the company director! Eric Randall rarely called; his assistant always organised all his appointments. Mike took a deep breath and picked up the phone.

"Mike. Good morning. Could you come up to my office please? I have something I'd like to discuss with you."

As he walked to the director's office, Mike wondered

what the director wanted. Perhaps it was about the promotion Mike had recently applied for.

Mike sat down at the large desk in front of Eric Randall, Director of Harrington's Logistics, UK. He listened to what Eric had to say.

Twenty minutes later Mike left his director's office feeling numb and a little surprised. He was being offered a chance for promotion, but not the promotion he'd asked for. He was being sent to... Brazil! BRAZIL!

Mike Carrington was quite an unadventurous man. Some colleagues found him dull. His only trip abroad had been twenty years ago, on a school trip to France. He was a serious and hard-working employee, however, and the director felt this was a good opportunity for him to use his knowledge.

Brazil. He knew very little about this huge country. Now he only had two weeks to learn some Portuguese and to finalise details with his colleagues about the project. He was both nervous and excited. In fact, the idea of a month in Brazil sounded positive and exotic. The director had explained that the project could be extended if everything went well. If he succeeded, he would have a senior management position. He sat at his desk and picked up the phone to call his wife Hannah.

## Chapter 3

# Three strange men

**Skim read the chapter once.**

- How does Mike feel when he wakes up?
- What has happened to Mike's luggage?
- What are the three men outside doing?

**Somewhere in southern Brazil**

**Monday 31st October**

Now Mike was in Brazil, somewhere in the south, but he didn't know where. Mike opened his eyes slowly; his head was aching. His mouth was dry and he was really thirsty. He looked nervously around him. *Where am I? Where on earth am I?*

He was in a small, dark room, lying on a narrow bed. He was still wearing all his clothes and his shoes. His suitcases were on the floor and somebody had looked through them. He looked to check the time; he thought it must be quite late at night. He was shocked to see he wasn't wearing his watch. It was missing! He stood up slowly and rubbed his head.

"Ouch, my head! What has happened to me?" he said. Nobody answered.

He tried to open the door but it was locked. Mike sat down on the only chair in the room. He tried to

remember what had happened that day. Slowly, his memory came back to him: *Two men met me at the airport, they seemed friendly. We got in a large car to go to the hotel and I drank some coffee. We didn't speak about business at this point. And then, nothing, I can't remember anything else... I think I am a prisoner! Somebody has kidnapped me! What am I going to do?*

Mike pulled up his chair to the window. When he stood on the chair he could just see outside. It was dark but he could see three men discussing something. He recognised two of the men: they were Paulo and Mauricio from the airport.

Paulo was a short, slim man with tanned skin. He was well dressed with a suit and tie despite the heat. Mauricio was a large, muscular man. He was wearing old jeans and a T-shirt. The other man was smartly dressed, too, like Paulo. His dark face was hidden by sunglasses.

Mike couldn't hear what the men were saying, but their expressions were very serious. The third man then turned round. Mike jumped off the chair quickly so they wouldn't see him.

This tall, dark man looked mysterious in his sunglasses. He looked familiar to Mike. Suddenly, Mike remembered where he had seen him. This man had been at the airport in Curitiba too. Mike had seen him as they drove away. *Why is he here now?* wondered Mike. For some reason, he was now arguing with Paulo and

Mauricio.

Mike looked through his luggage. His computer, like his watch, was missing. Mike knew he had to call head office or his wife or even the police.

Putting his hands in his pockets, he realised that someone had searched him when he was unconscious. He had no mobile phone, no passport, no watch and no computer. He was locked in a strange room in a country where he couldn't speak the language. Also, he had no friends here to help him. What was he going to do?

## Chapter 4

# Confusion in Brazil and London

**Skim read the chapter once.**

- Who was Mike expecting to meet at the airport?
- Who is John Hargreaves?
- What did Mrs Ribeiro ask the police to do?

**Somewhere in southern Brazil**

**Tuesday 1st November, 7.30 a.m.**

Frantically, Mike tried to open the window and the door again. It was no good — he was locked in. He sat on the bed waiting, shaking and thinking of his wife and children, his friends and his colleagues. He had no idea what time it was, but thought it must be early morning.

*Will I ever see them again?* he wondered.

He walked around the room, desperately trying to think of what to do.

Finally, he heard someone putting a key in the lock. The door opened and Mauricio ran into the room and grabbed Mike. He pulled him into another room where Paulo and the other man Mike had seen at the airport were standing. He saw his laptop on the table. It was switched on and some of the files were open.

“We’ve looked at your computer,” said Paulo.  
“There is lots of information about Harrison Logistics Ltd

and emails from someone called Aurelia Ribeiro in Curitiba. ” Paulo was really angry. “Give me answers, Mr Carrington. Give me answers now!”

Mike didn’t understand what Paulo wanted to know. He tried to explain what Paulo had read on the computer.

“Harrison Logistics is the name of the company where I work in London, and Mrs Ribeiro is the Brazilian colleague I was expecting to meet at the airport. In fact, I imagine Mrs Ribeiro is friendlier than you!”

“We know this is just a cover! We know you’re working undercover for someone!” Paulo said.

“What?!” panicked Mike.

“Don’t pretend otherwise,” Paulo shouted as Mauricio pushed Mike on to the chair and began tying his hands together. “Give us the information before we are forced to slowly kill you!”

Mike was absolutely terrified. However, he forced himself to stay calm.

“Listen, I think there has been a terrible mistake. I’m Mike Carrington. I have worked for Harrison Logistics Ltd for almost twenty years and this is my first business trip abroad. I have no idea who you are or what you want from me. I’m sure we can do something. Please, just take me back to the airport and let’s forget this ever happened. ”

The three men looked at each other and began shouting in Portuguese. Mike couldn’t understand anything; the only word he recognised was ‘Carrington’,



which all men repeated many times. The mysterious man from the airport was furious. He continued shouting at Paulo and Mauricio for a long time.

“Get back in your room, while we decide what to do with you!” Paulo yelled.

Mauricio untied Mike. He threw him back on to the bed and locked the door behind him. Mike was alone, confused and frightened. What was going on?

Meanwhile, back in London, Mike's best friend and colleague, John Hargreaves, finished his mid-morning coffee. He had just had a strange and confusing phone call. John called the director's secretary and insisted on being put through to his boss immediately.

“Eric, John Hargreaves here,” he began, “I've just had a very strange call from Aurelia Ribeiro in Curitiba.”

“Mike has gone out to meet her, hasn't he? She's the project development manager for the joint venture.”

“That's right. The strange thing is — Mike never showed up!” continued John.

“Mike didn't arrive? Are you sure he was on the flight?” Eric asked.

“Yes, yes he was,” confirmed John. “His wife called us this morning to say that the flight had left on time. Surely he didn't get lost when he changed planes in São Paulo?”

“Well, perhaps Mrs Ribeiro missed him at the