CHRISTOPHER SIMS

Christopher Sims was born in the Land of Pleasure to his delighted parents Jack and Laura Sims in the most luxurious maternity hospital in the land because the Sims were very rich. He was he first of four Sim boys. His siblings were Edward, Harold and Vincent. They were all much like their father, over six feet tall, handsome with green eyes and red curly hair. However, they had their mother's temperate character and manner of speaking – direct, forceful, energetic and unfortunately rather loud so their mild and retiring father had a hard time of it.

Jack Sims had been born as the only child into a middleclass family. The family were devout Christians, the father being a deacon in the local Baptist church. Jack attended the local government school and excelled in maths, passing matriculation with a distinction in Mathematics He was awarded a scholarship by the University of Pleasure from which he also graduated with a distinction in Mathematics. Jack then did an MBA in Global Business and joined a leading investment house. As his requirements were few because he lived at home, he invested most of his salary wisely. And that is how he became a billionaire and one of the richest men in Pleasure. Laura had recently joined the Baptist Church on transfer from the Land of Beauty, and they had fallen madly in love as soon as they met having tea in the hall after the morning service.

All their boys were bright but excelled in different subjects. Christopher's forte was English. Miss English who taught them English, stopped at Christopher's desk. "I did enjoy your fairy story, The wicked Queen, very much. As you will see, I have given you ten out of ten as I usually do." "Thank you, Miss English," Christopher replied, "I really appreciate your class. It's much better than Maths. I only just manage to pass in that!" When he matriculated, he was given a complete set of Shakespeare's plays at the prize giving ceremony in the school's hall. His parents were very proud of him. He enrolled at the University of Pleasure and majored in English, reading poetry and novels voraciously. To his dismay, he found he could not find subjects to write about. Everything he thought of had already been done. He tried historical stories, science fiction, romances, thrillers and everything else. "I have no inspiration," he lamented to himself. "Not like I used to have at school." And he fell into a state of depression. His worried parents sent him to a renowned psychiatrist, but all to no avail. They tried everything to cheer him up. They travelled to China and walked on the Great Wall of China that could be seen from the moon to South Africa where they stayed in a luxurious chalet at the Kruger National Park overlooking a river where animals came to drink. But Christopher never smiled. Neither did he eat much in world famous restaurants where they dined, and he lost a lot of

weight. His parents were distraught, and his brothers envious.

The Sims called their minister, Reverand Benjamin, and he hurried to see them and pray for Christopher. “My dear Christopher,” he said, “You are a Christian and your loving heavenly Father is with you. He loves you and he died for your sins and will hear you. I will ask the special confidential prayer group and my curate to pray for you.” “Thank you, Father Benjamin, but I have prayed and prayed and prayed – but God does not answer and help me, and I am such a worry to my parents.” “God most definitely hears you and will answer you! So do not worry. All will be well in God’s good time.”

Christopher decided to take matters into his own hands. “Despite having no inspiration, I will start writing novels,” he said to himself. “I will write a romance first.” It took him six months of hard work, but he was pleased with the result and during this time he put on weight and was much more cheerful. His parents were delighted. “Mum and Dad,” he said to his parents, “Please read my novel and tell me what you think?” His mum said, “Christopher, it’s marvellous. So very romantic, and you have never had a girlfriend.” His dad exclaimed,” Well I never! Just like Miss English said – you have a gift for stories.” His brothers asked to read The Girl

who lost her Lover, and they all agreed that it was sloppy. Christopher was thrilled and sent it to Best Books. He waited impatiently for a reply and began to wonder if despite paying extra postage it had not been delivered. He was mortified the following day to have his manuscript returned with a curt note saying they had already published a top seller with that title. As a result, he sent his precious book to GREAT BOOKS and waited expectantly for a reply. Unfortunately, it was the same as his previous reply. Undaunted he sent it to FINE BOOKS, BEAUTIFUL STORIES, WHEN ALL ELSE FAILS, TRY US. All with the same result.

Once again Christopher fell into a world full of sadness and delusion. He hardly ate although his mother served all his favourite meals. He lost weight very quickly and looked emaciated. His dad phoned the family doctor and explained the situation. “Oh dear,” said Doctor James, “he must see a psychiatrist. I can recommend Doctor Jameson.” But Doctor Jameson was no help at all. “I’ll try writing another novel. I will call it Ben’s adventure in space.” It turned out to be a very long and he thought, exciting and modern. Reading it at the end he felt chuffed with himself.” “I have done it this time!” And all the family agreed. But, unfortunately, none of the publishers to whom he sent it. “We are returning your manuscript. It was too far-fetched and painfully long.” they wrote. The whole of Christopher’s life reverted to what it had been, and his

parents were devastated, and his brothers were sorry for him. They really believed he had done it this time.

But Christopher was persistent. “I will write a thriller that will knock their socks off,” he said to the family. After a few days thought while he sat beside the swimming pool, he decided to call his thriller ‘The Kind Killer’ and he set to work immediately. Although it was a lengthy novel, it seemed as though time flew. “This is the best I have ever written. Miss English would have given me ten out of ten!” But, once again, Fabulous Books disagreed, and all the sorry cycle began again.

“I’m sick of this!” exclaimed his mother to his father. “I’m not carrying on with this any longer!” “Yes, agreed his father, “so am I but have you any ideas we can implement my Love?” “Yes” she answered, “we must find Christopher a girlfriend. Although he meets many eligible girls, he shows no interest in them at all unlike his brothers who chop and change girlfriends often. I can’t see any weddings or grandchildren for a long time.” They called Christopher to the study to ‘have a serious discussion about finding a girlfriend for him.’ Christopher was not at all charmed. “I’m not interested!” he protested vehemently. In the end, seeing his parent’s concern, he gave in. Every Saturday he would entertain a girl chosen by his Mum or Dad to lunch in

the conservatory and Cook would serve his favourite meal – shrimps in mayo in half an avocado, roast beef with Yorkshire pudding and mint sauce, and cream puffs filled with ice cream and strawberries and chocolate sauce. Of course, only his dad's finest champagne would be offered.

Jack spoke to his secretary of many years and explained the situation to her. "I have a pretty daughter of twenty-five whom you might like to consider," she said. "Oh! That's marvellous!" he exclaimed. Unfortunately, Christopher found her boring – "would be a good secretary if I needed one," he thought to himself. The following Saturday he entertained Paddy, a pretty girl who owned a small boutique in a nearby village. She arrived smiling and looking fabulous. Christopher was pleased. Unfortunately, she never stopped talking about her boutique, her customers, her assistants and her accountant. Next on the list was Angela whom Jack had met on the golf course. She played well and he was most impressed. "My son Christopher would like to have lunch with you on Saturday at my home. Will you come?" "Certainly, Jack," she answered, "I'd be delighted too." But she, too, did not meet his exacting standards. "What are your favourite novels, Penelope" he asked. "None," she replied, "I much prefer films. I have watched The Sound of Music ten times." Christopher's parents liked Rosemary, a pretty girl who sang in the church choir, and whom Christoppher knew well but had never

shown any interest in. She came to lunch and asked him so many pointless and private questions that he shuddered and told his parents, “Definitely not her.” And so, the procession of pretty girls dragged on. Patsy came to lunch, but she was a picky eater. “I have so many food allergies,” she said “that I can’t eat anything. By this time his parents were pulling out their hair in exasperation. “He’s impossible,” they agreed.

The next day Laura went to her dentist appointment. Doctor Bothwick was not there. “He fell and broke his hip and is now in hospital, Mrs Sims,” the receptionist said. “But his locum, Doctor Angela Morris is waiting to see you.” She led the way to the consulting room and introduced Laura to the dentist. Laura was surprised to see Angela. In fact, more than surprised for Angela was very tall, had red curly hair and green eyes. She could have been Christopher’s twin! “You seem rather surprised to see me, Mrs Sims,” said Angela. And she was most surprised when Laura told her why. After doing two fillings and giving Laura time to think, she said, “Doctor Morris, I see you don’t wear a wedding ring, but are you married?’ “No.” replied Angela with a smile. Fellows like me but not my height as I tower above them.” Please come for lunch with my son in our conservatory on Saturday. He’s been having lunch with girls for a year and has not found one that he likes or approves of. I think you will get on famously!” “Thank you, Mrs Sims, I

will be there at twelve thirty." Laura said to Christopher on her return, "I met a girl today and invited her to lunch with you on Saturday." "Oh no, Mum, I don't want to have another awful lunch!" "Well, I promise you this will be your last date!"

Christopher was waiting for his last date. He was bored. Boris, the butler, led Angela to the conservatory. They looked at each other, burst out laughing and immediately fell in love. They kissed and they kissed, and they kissed... Lunch was forgotten as they told both their parents that they were engaged. It was an afternoon of excitement and happiness. The wedding took place in the ancient Methodist Church in a nearby town. It was a truly Christian ceremony, and after a wonderful reception in the Grand Hotel, the couple left on their honeymoon in Japan.

On their return, they lived in the beautiful house Christopher's parents had given them. "I tried to become an author but failed miserably," he said to Angela where they were sunbathing in the garden beside the pool. "Why don't you ty again, I'm sure you could write a great romance – call it 'True Love Forever'." And he tried and it became a bestseller. Surprising what an actual experience can do!