

Joanna Thompson

**Long
Distance
Kisses**

Planet Girl



50/50

Did you ever have writer's **block**? No, me neither – until now. It's a terrible thing. I've been back at school in London for less than a week and already I'm sitting in front of a computer screen wishing I were somewhere else. Anywhere but Chalk Farm School for Girls in London. Hull, maybe. Mogadishu, perhaps. I have one of those stupid *What I did in the summer* essays to do for my English teacher, Mr Benn, and I feel sick every time I look at my **blank** screen. My fingers won't type.

*** block – Blockade *** blank – leer ***

One reason my fingers and my brain are on strike is that I've just had a *really* complicated summer. Being a famous international playgirl, I spent my holidays in two different places: Berlin and Scotland. If that doesn't *sound* too complicated, **trust** me – it was. My summer holiday experiences have left me confused. It feels like I left half of myself in Scotland and the other half in Berlin, which leaves ... none of me in London, *oder?* That would explain why I can't write my essay! What did *I do*, Mr Benn? I hardly even know who *I am* at the moment, Mr Benn.

For anyone else out there who doesn't know who *I am*, *I am supposed to* be Emily Hausmann. I'm 50% English and 50% German, which is sometimes really great and sometimes really a problem. Right now, it seems really tricky. Anyway, 100% of me left Berlin last year to come here to Chalk Farm School for Girls, a **posh** boarding school in London.

I shouldn't really still be here at all, **struggling** with my essay and confusion right now. The school year in London that my rich grandmother had paid for was officially over two months ago, in July. I'd done it all: Survived living in a **dorm** with a bizarre group of girls? *Tick*. Had my heart broken? *Tick*. Been the subject of at least one blog? *Tick*. Fallen in love again? *Tick*. Made great friends? *Tick*. Made a couple of real enemies? *Tick*. Got good grades? Well, anyway, you get the idea.

+++ to trust – vertrauen +++ to be supposed to – sollen +++
posh – reich +++ to struggle – kämpfen +++ dorm – Schlafsaal +++
Tick. – Abgehakt. +++

It was time, in other words, to go back to Berlin, to my friends there, my school, my family, with my head held high and **loads of** cool stories to tell. But I didn't. I decided to stay on in London instead.

I can remember the *exact* moment that I decided to stay in London, in fact. I was in a cupboard. Yes, that's right. A cupboard. I was in a cupboard kissing a boy named Sam, to be very precise. Even more precisely – a cute boy named Sam whom I had been dating for a few months. We ended up in the cupboard just after he played drums with his band, the Kitty Gagarins, for the last time. He was now getting ready to leave London and go back to his hometown in Scotland **for good**.

Yes, you heard me right and, no, it doesn't make any sense. I decided to stay on at Chalk Farm School for another year **even though** the boy I loved was leaving. Effectively, I decided to stay in London to be “with” a boy who would **actually** be living 667 km away.

Sam wasn't **heading** home to make my love life complicated, of course. The real reason was that his dad had lost his job and his family couldn't pay Sam's enormous **fees** at St Dougan's, the boys' school across the street, any more. That didn't stop Sam and me wanting to be together, though. Me being in London **rather** than Berlin seemed to *sort of* make sense: at least we would be on the same island!

+++ loads of – jede Menge +++ for good – endgültig +++ even though – obwohl +++ actually – eigentlich +++ to head – *hier*: gehen +++ fee – Gebühr +++ rather – eher +++

So we agreed to keep our relationship going – long distance love. It sounded quite romantic – *on paper*. We had it all planned out – *on paper*. But events over the summer have made everything more difficult, like I said. I'm so **guilty** about everything that I hate myself, I really do. And I keep wondering about the “cupboard **decision**”: was it the right one? Did it really make sense? Did I stay in London for the right reasons?

I give up with my essay for Mr Benn. I can't tell him what happened. I can, sort of, tell you – if you'll give me time. For any of this story to make sense, you'll have to remember that I am confused. I need to talk to someone first about the summer, sit down and go through everything until it comes together.

For the other 50%, the German part, you'll just have to wait a bit. Oh come on, it won't kill you.

+++ guilty – schuldig +++ decision – Entscheidung +++