

MULTICHANNEL

## Land Rover taps James Bond author for branded thriller

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*Land Rover's The Vanishing Game*

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By NANCY BUCKLEY

British automaker Land Rover enlisted British author William Boyd for a multimedia branded story on multiple platforms.

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**Luxury Daily**

"The Vanishing Game" is a short story based on an aspiring actor, Alec Dunbar, who goes on an adventure in a Land Rover Defender through Scotland. The branded short story was released on Tumblr and several other platforms, and will likely gain attention from fans of Mr. Boyd and avid readers.

"William Boyd is not only an extraordinary literary talent, but, like many Brits, he has Land Rover in his blood," said Ken Bracht, communications manager at [Land Rover North America](#), Mahwah, NJ.

"He was the perfect choice and he wrote an incredibly entertaining story that takes readers on a thrilling, yet mysterious driving adventure from London through the Scottish Highlands," he said.

Drop everything and read

The Vanishing Game is a short story that follows Mr. Dunbar as he adventures in a Land

Rover Defender. The vehicle is described as an “old grey sun-bleached, weather-battered Land Rover Defender, long wheelbase variety. The door on the driver’s side was a pale salmon pink. On the door, still legible, was a faded black stenciled codenumber: KT-99.” Mr. Dunbar travels in this vehicle to run an errand for a woman he meets at a failed audition.

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easy welcome to the polyglot, multicultural presences drawn to this great sprawling city. Bring it on – we can take it, the city seemed to say. Pagodas? Yeah, no problem.

I leant on the embankment wall looking at a cormorant diving for fish. It was twenty past six, and no sign of my actress and her thousand pounds. Some kind of sick joke, I thought, another young woman messing with my head, another sign of my bad –

“Alec!”

I picked up my rucksack and headed towards Miss Devereaux. It was absurd that I didn’t know her first name. She was standing in the car park to the east of the Pagoda, leaning against an old grey sun-bleached, weather-battered Land Rover Defender, long-wheelbase variety. The door on the driver’s side was a pale salmon pink. On the door, still legible, was a faded black, stenciled codenumber: KT-99.



*Alec Dunbar with Stella Devereaux and the Land Rover*

The tale can be read on a dedicated Tumblr page, within Apple's iBooks on an iPad and Mac, on Amazon’s Kindle ereader and the Kindle app on iOS, PC, Android, Mac and Web browsers.

A paid post campaign will also run in various media outlets with advertisements inspired by Mr. Dunbar. Spotify will also create a custom playlist modeled off the music from the journey in the book.



I used a wad of Stella Devereaux's cash to pay and flung everything in the back of KT-99. I took out the ordnance survey map and searched for a place where I could hole up for the night. I'd scope out the church in the morning – see what was what. Now I had a plan, I felt better. There was always the option of cut-and-run, with whatever dangers that involved, but I had a feeling that once the flask with its "holy water" was out of my hands the way ahead would appear obvious.

Night was drawing in as I drove KT-99 up a steep dirt track heading for the summit of a mid-sized mountain on the Moidart peninsula called Clachan Mor. I'd chosen it because it seemed equipped, as far as I could tell, with more of its share of cliff faces and corries, rock buttresses, shale slopes and moraines. And sure enough, half way up I saw a mass of huge boulders, the size of haystacks, detritus from some ancient glacier, with a Defender-sized gap at one end. I backed in and made camp.

I managed to semi-cover KT-99 with the olive green tarp that I'd bought, holding it in place with rocks. I unrolled my length of foam rubber and sleeping bag in the rear between the bench seats and then I cooked myself some supper on

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### *Video within story*

Within the Apple store version of the story, images and videos are embedded to help better tell "The Vanishing Game." On the Tumblr site, Mr. Boyd reads his book out loud while the text scrolls along with the spoken words.

Behind the text, images and videos play to enhance the story. Also, "The Vanishing Game" will host bits of videos from driving experiences from actual Land Rover consumers.

The campaign is being shared on social media through the hashtag #WellStoried.

### *Story time*

Micropublishing allows brands to reach large numbers of readers on platforms where they feel comfortable, according to panelists at ad:tech New York 2014 on Nov 5.

Two experts in micropublishing spoke on "The State of Mobile Creative – Micropublishing Platforms" panel about the space on mobile devices for readers to engage continually with amateur writers as they develop chapters and stories. This space also creates a personal experience for brands to reach out to consumers to tell their own stories through the words of their favorite authors in sponsored posts ([see story](#)).

Creating a branded story can create a fun and intriguing way for consumers to interact with the brand.

For instance, Italian fashion house Dolce & Gabbana elaborated on the ingredients that compose its fragrances through sponsored content on New York magazine's blog The Cut.

Dolce & Gabbana sponsored of The Cut's "Italy in 30 Days" section that publishes articles about the country's food, designers, news and other cultural topics. The brand's presence in this dedicated section likely reaffirmed Dolce & Gabbana's heritage and interest in modern day Italy ([see story](#)).

Placing a brand within a curated story helps to showcase its values.

"The inherent digital, interactive nature of The Vanishing Game is what makes this such a unique experience for readers," Mr. Bracht said.

"William Boyd's online adventure story is brought to life through original video, photography, animation, sound, music and narration, allowing readers to interact with the narrative in a manner not previously experienced in an eBook," he said.

"Also embedded throughout the book are snippets of driving journeys from actual Land Rover owners, curated using the hashtag #WellStoried. As readers scroll over key words or phrases, the owners' stories are displayed on-screen for a fully immersive storytelling experience."

Final Take

*Nancy Buckley, editorial assistant on Luxury Daily, New York*

Embedded Video: [//www.youtube.com/embed/DN69rW550SU](https://www.youtube.com/embed/DN69rW550SU)

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