

NOTE FOR TEACHERS

This play was written for Italian school audiences and contains many concepts, characters and situations with which they will be familiar, all within a simple English language context.

The following text is the complete play script, together with descriptions in italics of the physical action on the stage so the reader can follow the play with ease. Included are some notes and footnotes for teachers explaining certain aspects of the scenes.

A separate booklet, the Teachers' Handbook, is available for this play. It contains notes on the subjects and characters to help illuminate the text, a synopsis for quick preparation, and additional notes to give ideas for discussion.

Arcadia has prepared activities for the students for after the show:

- A printed test containing a questionnaire, true/false and multiple choice questions.
- Going to the site **www.ragazzi.info** students can enroll, and then complete a timed and marked test (using Moodle technology, i.e. they can't cheat!). This contains various types of questions like the printed test, but is more interactive, and has multimedia elements to make it more interesting.

I LOVE LONDON by Graham Spicer
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CHARACTERS

Charlie	an English boy
Tony	an Italian boy
Stewardess	a flight stewardess for London Airlines
Mrs Brown	a landlady of a Bed & Breakfast
Businessman	a traditional English Businessman
Mary	Mary Poppins, the English nanny
Holmes	Sherlock Holmes, the London detective
Tourists	an American and a Japanese tourist
Mamma	Tony's mother
Nelson	the statue of Admiral Nelson
Pigeon	a pigeon in Trafalgar Square
Victoria	Queen Victoria
Anne	Anne Boleyn, second wife of Henry VIII
Catherine	Catherine Howard, fifth wife of Henry VIII
Henry	Henry VIII

ACT ONE

GETTING READY

CHARLIE'S DIARY...

(Charlie's voice) Hello. My name's Charles, but all my friends call me Charlie.

Charlie is reading a letter in front of a window with a view over Oxford.

There I am, on the left, the one with the blond hair; and this is the story of my London adventure.

It is the story of the weekend I spent with my pen friend, Tony.

Tony is packing his rucksack in front of a window with a view of Milan.

That's him on the right, with the brown hair. His real name is Antonio, he's Italian, but I call him Tony. Tony's getting ready to come to London for the first time.

Charlie picks up a telephone and dials; Tony answers.

Tony *Pronto.*

Charlie Hi Tony, it's me, Charlie.

Tony *Ciao Charlie, come va?*

Charlie What?

Tony Sorry. How are you?

Charlie Fine thanks. Is everything ready?

Tony Yes. I go to the airport in ten minutes. And you?

Charlie Yes, everything's packed. Now when you get to London call me at Mrs Brown's Bed & Breakfast and I'll come and meet you. Have you got a pen?

Tony *Un'attimo... sì, l'ho trovata.*

Charlie Tony, stop speaking in Italian.

Tony Sorry.

I Love London

Charlie Never mind, but when you're here speak only in English.
Tony I get embarrassed, *imbarazzato*.
Charlie Just try.
Tony Ok. I'll try.
Charlie Right, this is the 'phone number of the Bed and Breakfast...

The lights go out we hear Charlie reading from his diary.

CHARLIE'S DIARY...

We were both ready for our weekend in London. I caught a train from Oxford where I live, and Tony caught a plane from Milan. His parents had booked a London Airlines flight, so from the moment the plane left the ground he had to start speaking in English...

We hear the noise of a plane taking off.

ON THE PLANE

NOTE FOR TEACHERS

This scene illustrates the use of the "H" sound in English, and some of the confusions that may arise; it also shows that we all make mistakes and don't need to be embarrassed by them!

Inside the plane, Tony is listening to the Stewardess, who reads Italian translations from a printed card.

Stewardess Good evening, and welcome aboard this London Airlines' flight. *Buona sera, e benvenuti a bordo del volo London Airlines.*

In the unlikely case of an emergency put on the life-jacket (she puts it on) and use the whistle to attract attention. (*she blows the whistle gently*) Please read the safety instructions that are printed on the card in front of you. (*she holds up the card*) If you feel unwell, make use of the bag provided. (*she holds up a paper sick-bag*)

If there is anything you need during the flight press the red

button. *Se c'è qualcosa di cui avete bisogno durante il volo premere il campanello rosso. (Tony laughs) I'm sorry, premere il campanello rosso.* Thank you for your attention and have a good flight. *Grazie per la vostra attenzione e buon coraggio... er... buon viaggio.*

The Stewardess exits. Tony finds his life-jacket under his seat and blows the whistle as the Stewardess re-enters with a tray. She drops everything. He puts the whistle near a businessman sitting behind him. The Stewardess, her hat fallen to one side, snatches the whistle angrily away from the businessman.

Stewardess *(to the businessman)* Please Sir, this is an aeroplane, not a football stadium. *(to Tony)* Good evening, would you like something to eat?

Tony Yes please. I'm very 'ungry *(he pronounces "hungry" without the "h" and it sounds like "angry")*

Stewardess Why? Don't you want to go to London?

Tony What?

Stewardess You're angry because you don't want to go to London?

Tony No, not angry, *(he mimes being angry)* I'm 'ungry. *(he rubs his stomach)*

Stewardess Oh, HHHHungry. *(she exaggerates the "h" sound)*

Tony Yes, HHHHungry. *(Tony does the same)*

Stewardess I'll go and get you something to eat.

The Hostess exits. Tony takes out the card with the safety instructions, folds it into a paper plane and throws it along the corridor. As it flies offstage we hear a scream and another loud crash. The Stewardess enters with a food trolley, her hair messed up after the fall. She walks up to the businessman and gives him the plane.

Stewardess *(to the businessman)* Please Sir, this is not a children's playground! *(to Tony)* Here's your meal, and your drink. *(she gives Tony a tray)* Is everything all right?

Tony It's very warm.

Stewardess Would you like some ice?

Tony Ice?

Stewardess To put in your drink.

Tony No, not my drink; there's too much 'eat.

Stewardess Oh, if you can't eat it all just leave it on the tray.

Tony No, not eat, (*he mimes eating*) 'eat. (*he mimes being hot*)

Stewardess Oh you mean HHHHeat.

Tony Yes, there's too much HHHHeat.

Stewardess One moment. (*she opens the air nozzle above him and a strong gust of cold air throws Tony back in his seat*) Is that better?

Tony I'd like a little less air.

Stewardess (*she thinks a little before replying*) Ahhh, there are lots of HHHairdressers in London.

Tony (*confused*) 'airdressers?

Stewardess Yes, to get your 'air cut.

Tony No, my 'air is ok, (*he pulls at his hair*) I want less air. (*he fans himself*)

Stewardess Oh, "air". Sorry Sir, now I'm getting confused. (*she turns off the cold air*) Are you more comfortable now?

Tony Fine, thank you.

The Stewardess exits. Tony takes out the paper sick-bag and fills it with air; then hits it between his hands making a large bang. The Stewardess, carrying a tray of glasses, screams and disappears off stage, there is another crash. Tony puts the bag next to the businessman. The Stewardess enters with her hair messy and her make-up smudged. She takes the bag away from the businessman.

Stewardess We hope that you've had a pleasant journey, and hope to have you aboard again soon. *Ci auguriamo abbiate trascorso un piacevole viaggio, e speriamo di riavervi presto assordo con noi... er... a bordo con noi.*

CHARLIE'S DIARY...

While Tony was causing confusion in the plane, I had already arrived in London by train, and I went to check in at Mrs Brown's Bed and Breakfast...

BED & BREAKFAST

There is a sign "Mrs Brown's B&B" outside a front door. Mrs Brown, the landlady, is dancing around her house alone. She is wearing a housecoat and her hair is wrapped in a towel; she is rather eccentric. Charlie rings the doorbell and Mrs Brown, opens it.

Charlie Hello. I'm Charlie Smith.

Mrs Brown Come in, come in. Do you dance? *(during the scene she starts dancing every now and then)*

Charlie *(confused)* Are you Mrs Brown?

Mrs Brown I am. Can you tango? *(she grabs him in the tango position)*

Charlie I haven't come to dance.

Mrs Brown Why not? You're very good.

Charlie I'm here for bed and breakfast.

Mrs Brown Of course you are. The bed's upstairs, and breakfast is tomorrow morning at eight o'clock. *(she dances around the room)*

Charlie Don't you need my name? My address?

Mrs Brown I hate bureaucracy don't you? *(she looks out of the door)*
Didn't you book for two people?

Charlie Yes. My friend's coming later. He's flying in from Italy.

Mrs Brown Italy! That's nice. Pasta... Pizza... Pavarotti... What's your friend's name?

Charlie Tony. Antonio. Antonio Bianchi.

Mrs Brown Antonio Bianchi and you are Charlie Smith. But you are English.

Charlie Yes, from Oxford.

Mrs Brown Oxford! Well that's a nice place too. I'm a Londoner myself. Born in London and lived here ever since. *(she dances)*

Charlie Can I go up to my room?

Mrs Brown Of course you can. Do you mind if I go out?

Charlie Not at all.

Mrs Brown It's the final tonight at Wembley.

Charlie Football?

Mrs Brown takes off her dressing-gown and towel to reveal a ballroom dress and an extravagant hairstyle underneath.

Mrs Brown No, the ballroom dancing final at the Wembley Dancing Club.
Do you want to come?

Charlie No thanks. I'll wait for my friend.

Mrs Brown Never mind, next time perhaps. I'll see you tomorrow morning.
Sleep well. Goodbye. *(she exits dancing)*

Charlie follows Mrs Brown out of the room.

CHARLIE'S DIARY...

So I went upstairs and started to unpack. Meanwhile, Tony had arrived at Heathrow Airport. His next task was to find Mrs Brown's Bed & Breakfast, but Tony was already lost...

THE BUSINESSMAN

NOTE FOR TEACHERS

The Businessman shows that although England is a country full of tradition, it is also technologically advanced and modern, and that the two aspects can go together. The scene also shows possible confusions with the "TH" sound.

Tony enters with a map of London - he is lost. He is wearing an overcoat, scarf, and gloves.

Tony *Dove sono? Londra è troppo grande! (he looks at his map)
Che caldo! Pensavo che c'era sempre pioggia in Inghilterra...
e questo sole non me lo aspettavo.*

A Businessman enters with bowler hat, umbrella and briefcase.

B.man Ah, a foreigner.

Tony Pardon?

B.man *(speaking slowly and loudly)* You - are - not - English. You -
are - a - foreigner.

Tony Yes, I'm Italian.

B.man Ah, Italy! Puccini... Pisa... Prosciutto...

Tony Yes.

B.man And, of course, the *vino*! I often have a glass of Chianti with my dinner.

Tony You drink wine? In London?

B.man Of course. In London I can drink Italian espresso coffee and eat Italian Amaretto biscuits. You look surprised.

Tony I thought...

B.man ...you thought that London is like that place you see in films and read about in books: full of fog and people in pubs drinking beer.

Tony Don't they...?

B.man (*whispering*) Well, yes. But London is more than that, just like Italy is more than pizza and pasta.

Tony Why are you wearing a carnival costume?

B.man This isn't a costume. This is my business suit. My red carnation, and my black bowler hat and umbrella: the traditional English Businessman. Right?

Tony Right.

B.man Traditional, old-fashioned and out-of-date. Right?

Tony Well...

B.man Wrong! I also have a laptop computer (*he indicates his briefcase*) and I send e-mail on the internet - that's why I'm also a modern English Businessman.

Tony Things aren't always what they seem.

B.man Exactly. London is not a museum - it's a big, modern business centre.

Tony (*Tony looks at his map*) It's very big!

B.man You're lost? (*Tony nods*) I thought so.

Tony And this map is very thick! (*with his Italian accent he pronounces "thick" as "sick"*)

B.man (*surprised*) Sick?! How can a map be sick?

Tony (*Tony illustrates with his hands*) "sick", it's very "sick".

B.man Oh, not sick (*he mimes being sick*) but THick.

Tony (*Tony tries again*) "Sick".

B.man (he demonstrates) No, watch very carefully: you put your tongue out a little and say THHHHick.

Tony "THHHHick".

Tony's "th" sounds like a raspberry¹ and he sprays the Businessman with saliva.

B.man I think we'd better stop this lesson. Now, where do you want to go?

Tony Leicester Square.

B.man Easy. Walk straight to the end of Charing Cross Road, and you'll see it.

Tony Thhthank you. (he pronounces it correctly)

B.man Bravo! You're learning. Well done! (he exits)

CHARLIE'S DIARY...

Tony got to Leicester Square in London where I met him and took him to Mrs Brown's. We went to bed early as we were both tired, and awoke on Saturday morning to the smell of frying eggs and bacon...

ENGLISH BREAKFAST

NOTE FOR TEACHERS

This scene shows how it can be fun to try new things when abroad. We hear later in the play that Tony enjoys his English breakfast even if in this scene he is reluctant to try.

There is a breakfast table laid with a cloth, and two chairs.

Charlie Good morning Mrs Brown. Something smells good!

Mrs Brown (from the kitchen) Sit down boys. Breakfast is almost ready. (they sit)

Charlie (to Tony) Are you ready for your first English Breakfast?

Tony I don't think I am, no.

Charlie Don't be silly. You'll like it.

Tony Will I?

1 raspberry - pernacchia

Charlie Of course you will: bacon and eggs, fried bread, tomatoes, sausages...

Tony Stop! Is this breakfast or lunch?

Charlie Breakfast. Sometimes there are fried mushrooms, kidneys...

Tony Kidneys?

Charlie Yes kidneys. *(he points)*

Tony *Rognoni*. At eight o'clock. *Sei pazzo!*

Charlie You can eat porridge too, and toast and marmalade...

Tony *Charlie, sei vai avanti così mi farai vomitare! io voglio solamente un cappuccino e una brioche.*

Charlie Tony, speak in English.

Tony Sorry. *Ma è difficile*. It's difficult.

Charlie Try. Nobody will laugh. Well not much anyway!

Mrs Brown *(from the kitchen)* Boys! Your breakfast is ready!

Charlie Coming! *(to Tony)* Sit still, I'll go.

Charlie goes into the kitchen and returns with an enormous tray full of toast, marmalade, butter, eggs, bacon and so on. He gives it to Tony and goes out again.

Tony Wow!

Charlie re-enters with a cup of coffee and a croissant.

Tony Where's your breakfast?

Charlie This is my breakfast.

Tony And the famous English Breakfast?

Charlie Errrrhh! I couldn't possibly eat all that, first thing in the morning.

Tony But Charlie...?!

Mrs Brown *(from the kitchen)* Eat up Tony, or it'll get cold.

Charlie Yes, eat up Tony! *(Charlie goes out laughing)*

Tony *(whispering)* I'll kill you later...!

Mrs Brown *(from the kitchen)* I hope you like English Breakfast.

Tony Oh yes Mrs Brown. I love it. It looks delicious. *(quietly)* Yuk!

CHARLIE'S DIARY...

After breakfast we decided to go and visit Madame Tussaud's waxwork museum, but first, Tony wanted to get tickets for the matinée performance at the Royal Opera House. So I went on ahead, and with my guide book to help me, I started looking around...

MADAME TUSSAUD'S: MARY POPPINS

There is a notice which reads "ROOM 1: BRITISH LITERATURE". There is a door with the number 221B on it, and four statues: Oliver Twist, Peter Pan, Sherlock Holmes and Mary Poppins. Charlie enters reading the guide book.

Charlie "Madame Tussaud set up her famous wax museum in London in 1802. Room 1: British Literature. London has been the setting for many famous stories including Oliver Twist, Peter Pan, Sherlock Holmes and Mary Poppins..."

The waxwork statue of Mary Poppins comes alive. She carries her umbrella and bag.

Mary Yes?

Charlie Who are you?

Mary Don't be silly. Only ask questions if you don't know the answers.

Charlie Mary Poppins.

Mary Exactly. *(she gives him her business card)*

Charlie *(he reads:)* "Mary Poppins: Practically Perfect in Every Way".

Mary Why have you come to Madame Tussaud's?

Charlie To see the waxworks.

Mary Yes. But why?

Charlie Er... well... I don't know.

Mary You don't know?! That's not a very good answer Charlie.

Charlie You know my name?! *(his mouth is open in amazement)*

Mary I know practically everything. Now please close your mouth; you look like a fish in a goldfish bowl.

Charlie I don't believe it: you're alive!

- Mary Of course I'm alive, but I'm not sure about you! *(she peers into his ear)* Yes, just as I thought, I can see right through to the other side. You have an empty head Charlie. We need to fill your head with some knowledge. Perhaps that's why you've come to Madame Tussaud's: to learn.
- Charlie Er...
- Mary I'm glad you agree.
- Charlie Do I?
- Mary Of course you do. I'm practically always right. *(she sits him on a chair)* Now sit down, we need to start work.
- Charlie Work? But I'm on holiday. *(he stands)*
- Mary Sit down, or I'll send you straight to bed!
- Charlie *(he laughs)* But I'm not a little boy!
- Mary *(she holds his ear and leads him to sit, like a little boy)* If you act like a little boy you'll get treated like a little boy. Sit! *(he sits)* Open your mouth. *(she gets a large medicine bottle out of her bag — it is much bigger than the bag itself!)*
Head back!
- Charlie *(she takes a giant sugar bowl from her bag)* What are you going to do with the sugar bowl?
- Mary Just a spoonful of sugar helps the medicine go down.
- Charlie And what is the medicine?
- Mary "Intelligence Medicine". Head back please.
- Charlie opens his mouth and Mary fills it with sugar. Then she adds a litre of medicine while she sings "Just a spoonful of sugar helps the medicine go down" from the film Mary Poppins.*
- Mary There we are, all done. One large dose of Intelligence Medicine. Let's see if it's worked. Listen and follow on: "In fourteen hundred and ninety two..."
- Charlie ...Columbus sailed the ocean blue."
- Mary Good. "In fourteen hundred and ninety three..."
- Charlie ...he sailed right back across the sea."²
- Mary Excellent. Now tell me the longest word you know.

Charlie Supercalifragilisticexpialidocious!

Mary Well done Charlie!

SONG: SUPERCALIFRAGILISTICEXPIALIDOCIOUS

Mary Now Charlie, remember as you walk around Madame Tussaud's: look, listen and learn, then one day you might be like me: Practically Perfect in Every Way. *(she disappears)*

Charlie *(he looks at her business card)* "Mary Poppins: Practically Perfect in Every Way". *(he laughs)* I don't think I'll never be practically perfect! Now... *(he reads his guidebook)* "Number 221B Baker Street is the house of Sherlock Holmes, London's most famous detective..."

Tony *(running)* Charlie, sorry I'm late.

Charlie Better late than never. Come on, now that you're here, we can go and see the Chamber of Horrors! *(Charlie exits)*

Tony Just a minute! *Sono esausto! (he takes off his rucksack and searches inside) Eccola! (he gets out a book) Ho comprato una guida in italiano, ma non voglio che Charlie la veda. Allora, dove siamo? "Room one." Trovato. "Numero 221B Baker Street è la casa di Sherlock Holmes, l'investigatore più famoso a Londra."*

MADAME TUSSAUD'S: SHERLOCK HOLMES

The Sherlock Holmes scene lets the actor go among the audience and involve them in the action of the play.

Tony knocks on the front door of number 221B Baker Street.

Holmes *(from behind the door)* Who's there?

Tony *(to audience)* Someone answered!

Holmes Of course I answered. You knocked didn't you?! Who are you?

Tony I'm Tony.

Holmes Wait a minute.

Sherlock Holmes enters. He's not a very good detective, and Tony observes more than he does.

Holmes Well Mr Tony?

Tony I'm not Mr "Tony", my full name is...

Holmes Ah, a false name! But I know who you really are.

Tony You do?

Holmes From the accent you must be Italian.

Tony Yes.

Holmes Your false name is probably an English version of your real name. Tony... Of course, Toe-knee. *(he points to Tony's toe and knee)* So your real name must be... Signor Dito-Ginocchio! No. That can't be right. *(he secretly reads from the label on Tony's rucksack)* Antonio.

Tony Yes.

Holmes Antonio Bianchi.

Tony Yes! Incredible!

Holmes And you're staying at Mrs Brown's Bed and Breakfast.

Tony Yes! Amazing. How did you do it?

Holmes I'm not London's most famous detective for nothing. *(he gives a business card to Tony)* Here's my number. Give me a call if you ever need any detective work done. Goodbye. *(he goes into his house)*

Tony *Incredibile!*

A thief quickly crosses the stage, he throws a banana skin on the ground, and steals Tony's rucksack.

(Tony reads:) "Sherlock Holmes: London's Most Famous Detective" *Devo tenerlo in un posto sicuro. (he turns to put it in his rucksack and sees that it's disappeared)* Sparito. *Qualcuno l'ha preso, e c'è tutto la dentro! (he looks at the card)* Sherlock Holmes! *(Tony knocks on the door)*

Holmes *(from behind the door)* Who's there?

Tony Tony.

Holmes Tony who?

Tony "Signor Dito-Ginocchio", and I need the help of London's most

famous detective.

Holmes enters.

Holmes How can I help you?

Tony My rucksack's been stolen.

Holmes Stolen? By who?

Tony I don't know. That's why I called you.

Holmes Oh yes, of course. Now be very quiet, we must listen for clues.

Tony *(we hear a scream offstage and cries of "Thief, stop the thief!")*
Did you hear that?

Holmes Shh, I'm trying to listen. *(we hear a cat meowing; Holmes is alarmed)* What's that?

Tony A cat?

Holmes A cat! Well done! Let's stop listening and let's start looking for clues.

Holmes, with a magnifying glass, finds the banana skin.

Ah, this looks suspicious. *(Tony picks it up)* Careful, it might be dangerous!

Tony It's just a banana skin.

Holmes Ah yes... good boy! *(Holmes throws it offstage and we hear a shout as someone slips on it)* I said it might be dangerous. *(he looks through his magnifying glass at the audience)* Ugh, what's that?

Tony It's the audience.

Holmes The audience! It's horrible. Well if the thief isn't here... he must be in the audience. You go and call the police. I will find your stolen rucksack. *(Tony exits)*

Holmes goes into the audience with a torch to find the thief. He picks up bags and shines the torch at "culprits". Eventually he returns to the stage which is now in darkness. The Thief enters holding the rucksack, but in the darkness they don't see each other. Eventually Holmes shines his torch in the their's face, they scream, the thief drops the rucksack, and they run off the stage in opposite directions. Tony returns.

Tony *Il mio zianetto! (he shouts towards the door)* Thank you Mr Holmes!

Tony puts his rucksack back on, and Charlie enters.

Charlie Where have you been? I've been waiting!

Tony I was helping Sherlock Holmes.

Charlie What?

Tony *(he reads Holmes' business card)* "Sherlock Holmes, London's Most Famous Detective".

Charlie *(he reads Mary Poppins' business card)* "Mary Poppins: Practically Perfect in Every Way".

They both turn and look at the waxwork statues of Holmes and Poppins.

 This is very strange. Sherlock Holmes and Mary Poppins only exist in books.

Tony Or in waxwork museums.

Charlie And waxworks don't have business cards! Come on, let's get out of here.

Tony holds out the theatre tickets.

Charlie Of course, we've got tickets for the theatre. Let's hurry! *(they run off)*

CHARLIE'S DIARY...

 We ran across London, glad to escape from Madame Tussaud's Waxwork Museum. We arrived just in time for the matinée performance at the Royal Opera House.

THE ROYAL OPERA HOUSE

The Phantom of the Opera is standing on the stage of London's Royal Opera House. He wants to stop the performance. He makes soprano lose her voice and he kidnaps the ballerina, who is replaced at the last minute, by a male dancer in her costume! When the performance can't go on, the Phantom sends everyone out of the theatre, and so we, the real audience, can enjoy...

... THE INTERVAL

ACT TWO

LONDON TOURISTS

A typical London scene: red telephone box; double-decker bus, post box, bus stop, etc. Two tourists, an American woman and a Japanese man, are photographing everything, and have lots of shopping bags.

SONG:

WHAT A PHOTOGRAPH!

American *(she talks to the audience)* I love London! Don't you? There are so many things to photograph.

(she takes a photo of the audience) And the shops! I love shopping. Look what I bought. *(she takes a large hat out of a shopping bag and puts it on)*

Tony enters and looks at the bus timetable. He then sees the American.

Tony Excuse me.

American Hi.

Tony Do you know the number of the bus for Trafalgar Square?

American I'm sorry, I don't. I'm an American.

Tony Oh, I saw the hat and thought you were English.

American Do you like it? It's a copy of a hat worn by Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II. *(she sees a taxi pass)* Excuse me, but I must go and do some more shopping. Taxi!

The American leaves. Tony goes into a red English telephone box, and dials.

TELEPHONE BOX

Mamma *Pronto.*

Tony *Ciao mamma, sono io.*

Mamma *Ciao Antonio, come va?*

Tony *Tutto bene.*

Mamma *Mangi?*

Tony *Certo che mangio. Questo mattino ho fatto colazione all'inglese. Buonissima: uova, pancetta, salsicce, funghi...*

Mamma *O poverino! Hai preso l'alka selzer che ti avevo dato?*

Tony *Mamma, mi hai dato abbastanza medicine per tutti gli ospedali a Londra.*

Mamma *Quando tornerai a casa ti preparerò una bella cassoeula. Sei abbastanza coperto? Hai su la tua sciarpa?*

Tony *No mamma, fa caldo qui. C'è un sole della Madonna!*

Mamma *Non scherzare con me Tonino, sono preoccupata.*

Tony *Non sto scherzando: mangio bene, mi sto abbronzando, parlo in inglese, e mi diverto. Devo andare, i soldi stanno finendo e devo prendere il prossimo autobus. Ti chiamo più tardi.*

Mamma *Stai attento, Antonio.*

Tony *Va bene. Ciao!*

CHARLIE'S DIARY...

I'd agreed to meet Tony in Trafalgar Square at one o'clock. But Tony didn't arrive. So I waited, and I waited, and I waited, but still he didn't come. He must have had trouble finding the right bus...

TRAFALGAR SQUARE

Nelson is on top of his column in Trafalgar Square, and Charlie stands below, waiting anxiously for Tony to arrive. We hear Big Ben strike two o'clock.

Charlie *Two o'clock! Where's Tony?*

Nelson *(shouting) You look worried.*

Charlie *I'm waiting for a friend. I think he must be lost.*

Nelson *Can I help you look?*

Charlie *That's very kind, but... (he turns round but can't see anyone)*

Nelson *I'm up here! On top of my column.*

Charlie *(Charlie looks up) How did you get up there?*

Nelson They put me up here after I won the Battle of Trafalgar; that's why this square is called Trafalgar Square.

Charlie So you must be Nelson.

Nelson Do you want to come up?

Charlie No. Not really.

Nelson Oh come on! There's a great view! I'll throw you down a rope. *(he throws down the rope and Charlie grabs the end)* Hold on tight.

Charlie is pulled up and arrives on top of Nelson's Column.

Charlie Wow! You're right, it's a fantastic view. I can see all of London from here. *(Charlie turns round)* Look, you can see the National Gallery.³

Nelson I can't. I can't turn round.

Charlie Why not.

Nelson I'm a statue, so I'm a bit stiff. I'm made of stone.

Charlie *(Charlie hits him and hurts his hand)* Ow! You've got muscles like Schwarzenegger!⁴

Nelson Watch out! *(there is a sound like an aeroplane flying past)*

Charlie What was that?!

Nelson One of the pigeons. They've got no respect. Just look at me, *(he has bird droppings on his shoulders and hat)* I'm covered in... Careful! Here he comes again! *(there is the same sound followed by a loud plop as something lands in Charlie's eye!)*

Charlie Errrrrr! *(Charlie wipes his eye)*

Nelson Bad luck. You get used to it after a while.

Charlie I don't want to get used to it. I want to find Tony.

Nelson Ah yes, your friend. Now where shall I look? *(he uses his telescope)*

Charlie Try the Houses of Parliament.

Nelson *(Nelson searches)* There are lots of men in grey suits outside. Does your friend wear a grey suit?

Charlie No he doesn't. Or maybe he's gone to Buckingham Palace.

3 The National Gallery forms the north side of Trafalgar Square.

4 Or any current famous muscle-man.

Nelson (*Nelson looks again*) I can see a large group of Japanese tourists. Is your friend Japanese?

Charlie No he's not. It's no good, we'll never find him.

Nelson (*we hear the pigeon approaching*) Oh no, not again. (*Charlie covers his eyes, but the pigeon lands on Nelson's shoulder*) Go away will you?!

Pigeon Hello Nelson.

Nelson Get off me!

Pigeon Keep quiet or I'll sit on your nose. Charlie, I've found your friend.

Charlie Tony? Good, I was getting worried.

Pigeon Nelson, point your telescope down the Strand. (*Nelson points his telescope at the audience*) Can you see a boy with a rucksack?

Nelson Yes! Yes, I can see him.

Charlie Great, where is he?

Nelson Outside a strange red and yellow building... it's called... "MacDonald's".

Charlie MacDonald's! I've been waiting for over an hour while Tony's been eating a Big Mac?!

Pigeon It looks like it. Where were you both meant to be going?

Charlie To the National Gallery.

Pigeon You go into the gallery and start looking around, and I'll fly and tell Tony where you are. Ok?

Charlie That's perfect. Thanks.

Pigeon You're welcome. 'Bye! (*he flies off*)

Nelson If you want to get down, grab the rope, and jump.

Charlie Thanks for everything! (*he swings offstage*)

CHARLIE'S DIARY...

So I went into the National Gallery to look around until Tony arrived. By the time Tony caught the bus, I was already inside the National Gallery and had started to look at the paintings, and what fantastic paintings!

THE NATIONAL GALLERY

There are various paintings on the wall⁵. Charlie enters reading the Guide Book.

Charlie "London's National Gallery contains some of the finest pictures in the world..." (*Charlie looks around*) Oh look, Henry the Eighth! I know that face.

(he looks at the angels) Look: one, two, three, four, five... it's the "Spice Girls"!⁶

(he looks at the nude) Mmm, I like art!

(he sees the portrait of Queen Victoria) AAhhh, who is that?

(he reads:) "Queen Victoria was Queen of England for sixty-four years, and died at the age of eighty-one". *(he pulls a funny face in front of the picture; behind him Queen Victoria enters, a very short woman)* No, not even a smile! I wouldn't like to meet her on a dark night - she'd frighten me to death!

Victoria We are not amused!⁷

Charlie (*Charlie turns round, surprised*) What?

Victoria I heard every word you said.

Charlie (*embarrassed*) Ah, did you? (*he looks at the portrait*) Dreadful painting. It doesn't look like you at all.

Victoria I don't find you funny.

Charlie Yes, I can see that!

Victoria You should have a little more respect.

Charlie I'm sorry. You're right.

Victoria I have many worries. It isn't easy being Queen Victoria.

Charlie Maybe it would be easier if you smiled sometimes.

Victoria I have to be serious. I have many responsibilities. I am a small woman in a big man's world. It's hard for a woman to be taken seriously in the 19th century.

5 The paintings are: a portrait of Henry VIII, a group of five angels by Piero della Francesca, a nude by Velázquez, and a portrait of Queen Victoria.

6 Improvised using the latest girl or boy band.

7 Queen Victoria famously remarked "We are not amused!", and the paintings and photographs of her show a very serious woman. Her diaries however show that she enjoyed life.

- Charlie I suppose so. But perhaps you could laugh when you are alone.
- Victoria My dear boy, if I was heard laughing to myself I'd be locked away as a madwoman.
- Charlie Oh please try. I'm sure you'd feel much better.

SONG: PUT ON A HAPPY FACE

Dancing and singing, Queen Victoria exits. Charlie laughs.

- Charlie ...and I thought galleries were such quiet places! (*Victoria's portrait is now smiling*) Even her portrait's smiling now. (*he looks at his watch*) It's nearly three o'clock. Where's Tony?

Tony rushes in.

- Tony Charlie! I'm sorry I'm late.
- Charlie Where have you been?
- Tony I had trouble catching the right bus.
- Charlie And how was MacDonald's?
- Tony How did you know?
- Charlie Oh, a little bird told me!⁸ Come on. If we want to get to the Tower of London we'll have to hurry. (*They exit*)

CHARLIE'S DIARY...

We ran down to the River Thames where we caught a ferry to take us to the Tower of London. When we arrived it was almost closed, but a friendly Beefeater let us in...

8 Idiom: A little bird told me. If someone doesn't want to say where they got some information from, they can say that a little bird told them. In this case a bird (the pidgeon in Trafalger Square) really did provide the information!

THE TOWER OF LONDON

NOTE FOR TEACHERS

We meet one of the most famous English historical figures, Henry VIII, who severed ties with the Roman Catholic Church when the Pope refused to annul his first marriage. He also famously severed the heads of two of his wives! In this scene use is made of idioms containing the word "head": to laugh one's head off (to laugh hysterically); to be head-over-heels in love (to be completely infatuated); to have a head start (to start before the others).

There is a wooden block and axe used for beheading. Two Beefeaters are standing guard.

Charlie *(he reads the Guide:)* "The Tower of London was constructed by William the Conqueror nine-hundred years ago..." *(we hear a rattle of keys and the creaking of a large wooden door)*

Tony What was that?

Charlie Listen! "Various Kings, Queens and noblemen lost their lives in the Tower..." *(Charlie runs to the axe)* Look Tony, this is the axe that was used to chop off their heads! *(we hear a distant scream)*

Tony Did you hear that?

Charlie What?

Tony A scream!

Charlie You were talking to Sherlock Holmes for too long!

Tony But I heard a scream.

Charlie Tony, it says here "...the last prisoner was killed in 1810." It's just your imagination. *(we hear ghost-like wailing)*

Tony I'm going to investigate. *(Tony exits)*

Charlie Tony! Where are you going? Come back! *(he goes back to the book)* "Among those executed in the Tower are two wives of Henry VIII: Anne Boleyn and Catherine Howard..."

The ghosts of the two wives enter, carrying their heads under their arms.

(reading) "Legend says that sometimes the ghosts of the dead wives can be seen walking the corridors of the Tower..." *(he closes the book)* Ghosts! How ridiculous.

Catherine wails loudly behind him. Charlie turns and sees them.

Charlie Tony! TONYYYYYYY! *(he runs off)*

Catherine *(wailing)* Oooooooo, my head!

Anne Will you be quiet!

Catherine Oooooooo, my head hurts.

Anne So will mine if you don't stop making all this noise.

Catherine Sorry, but I've got a terrible headache. Oh no!

Anne What is it now?

Catherine Henry's coming.

Both Oh no! OOOooooooo...!

Henry VIII enters.

Henry What is all this noise? *(he sees them)* Oh, it's you two.

Both Hello Henry.

Henry *(to Anne)* Hello Wife Number Two. *(to Catherine)* Hello Wife Number Five.

Anne Don't call me "Wife Number Two", my name is Anne Boleyn.

Catherine And I'm Catherine Howard.

Henry Of course, but it's much easier to number you all: Wives One, Two, Three, Four, Five and Six.

Anne *(upset)* O Henry, you never were romantic! I was head-over-heels in love with you...

Catherine ...and now you're head-under-arm. *(they wail again)* Oooooooo!

Henry Ladies, if you don't keep quiet I'll... I'll...

Both Cut off our heads? *(they laugh)*

Henry That's right laugh your heads off. It wasn't easy being King of England.

Anne It wasn't easy because you didn't always get your own way. The Pope didn't do as you wanted...

Catherine ...so you formed your own church!

Both And we all know what happened when your wives didn't do as you wanted! Oooooooo!

Henry I'm sorry I cut off your heads.

- Catherine So you should be! When I sneezed yesterday, I lost my head completely!
- Henry Catherine don't exaggerate.
- Catherine I'm not. I sneezed and my head flew over the castle walls. That's why I've got such a bad headache. Ooooooo!
- Henry That's it! I'm going. I can't bear that noise! (*he exits*)
- Catherine Ooooooo!
- Anne Shhh. He's gone! Did you really lose your head over the wall?
- Catherine Of course not. But I like to make Henry feel guilty!

Anne and Catherine exit, talking all the way.

- Anne Come on, let's get back to our tower.
- Catherine Ok, I'll race you.
- Anne Don't be so silly.
- Catherine I'll give you a head start!
- Anne Catherine.
- Catherine Yes.
- Anne Shut up will you? (*their voices fade away*)

CHARLIE'S DIARY...

Tony and I arrived exhausted at Mrs Brown's Bed and Breakfast to shower and change. We arrived at the theatre just in time...

MUSICAL MATINEE

Outside a theatre there is a poster for the musical gala "I Love London". SOLD OUT is written across it. There is a small door marked STAGE DOOR. The two boys arrive, out of breath.

- Charlie Here we are. This is the theatre.
- Tony (*reading*) "Sold out".
- Charlie What?
- Tony It says, "sold out". Esaurito.
- Charlie Oh no! It can't be! It's too late to get to another theatre now!

Tony *(pointing to the door)* Stage door?
 Charlie That's the artists' entrance.
 Tony Let's go in that way.
 Charlie Tony we can't.
 Tony Don't be so English; *facciamo all'italiana!* Come on, follow me!
 (Tony pulls Charlie offstage)

Inside the theatre, backstage. The Gala has already started and we can hear the music. The boys enter.

Charlie Tony, we're backstage. We can't stay here.
 Tony Why not? There's nobody around. At least we can hear the show, even if we can't see it. *(we hear music offstage)*
 Charlie Listen, it's music from the West End musicals.
 Tony Charlie, help me with this. *(they open the lid of a theatre trunk⁹)* Wow!
 Charlie It's full of masks and costumes! *(Tony puts on a mask)* Tony the show is sold out, but we've got music, costumes and masks. Why don't we do a show? Here... now...!

With music from famous West End stage musicals including CATS and CHICAGO, the boys act out some of the numbers using the masks and costumes from the trunk. Eventually they close the trunk and collapse on top of it, exhausted.

Charlie What a way to finish our weekend!
 Tony *(in perfect, if exaggerated English)* I Have Had a Happy Holiday, THank you so much.
 Charlie *(laughing)* Well done! I Have Had a Happy Holiday too. THank you. Let's do it again soon. *(music starts again)*
 Tony What's that?
 Charlie It's the music for the finale. You can't have a show without a finale!

The two boys put on a last costume and dance the finale of I Love London.

