

Dino's Day in London



Stephen Rabley



S/T

221

Dino

PENGUIN READERS



Tommy Grant is a taxi driver in London. He works for TOP TAXIS.

One day Tommy's boss, Sam, telephones him. It is very early in the morning.

"Tommy," says Sam. "Can you be at The Ritz hotel at 9.00 o'clock?"

"Yes," says Tommy, "but why?"



Sam and his wife are having breakfast with their children, Billy and Katy. "Gloria Brash is in London," says Sam.

"Gloria Brash!" says Tommy. "The film star! Where do you want me to drive her?"

"Not *her*," says Sam. "*Him*. Her 12 year-old son Dino wants to see London today. His mother's working."



“There’s a letter for you at The Ritz. There’s £50, too. That’s for Dino.”

“£50 for one day in London!” says Tommy. “That’s a lot of money.”

“I know,” says Sam. “Be *very nice* to the boy, Tommy, and don’t be late.”

“You know me,” says Tommy. “I’m always early.”



It is 8.45. Tommy is at The Ritz fifteen minutes early.
He goes to the desk.

“I’m from TOP TAXIS,” he says. The woman behind the desk gives him the letter and the money. The letter says, ‘It’s Dino’s first time in London. Please take him to *all* these places (1) Buckingham Palace (2) Harrods (3) the British Museum.’



“OK,” thinks Tommy. “Now, is Dino here? I know I’m early, but...” He sees a boy in a chair.

“Hello,” he says. “Are you Dino?”

“That’s me,” says the boy. “Are you the driver from TOP TAXIS?”

“Yes,” answers Tommy. The boy stands up.

“OK,” he says. “Let’s go.”

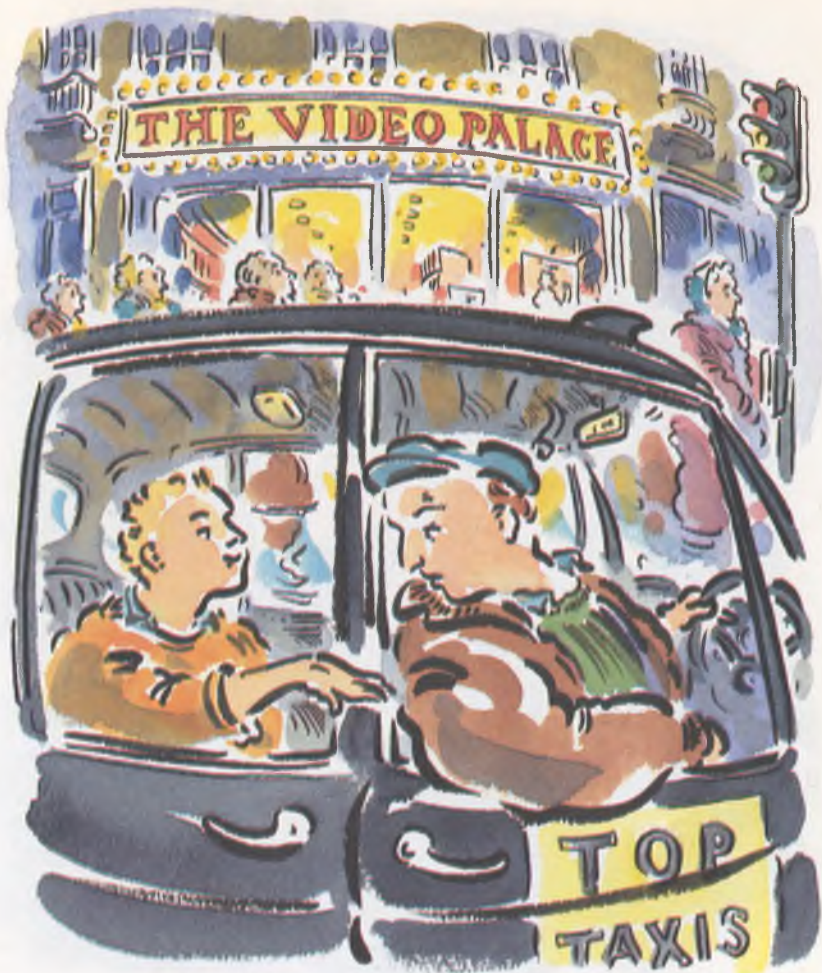


First, Tommy drives to Buckingham Palace – the home of the Queen. He stops the taxi.

“What are you doing?” asks Dino. “I don’t want to see this old place.”

Tommy looks at him. “But I...” Then he remembers Sam’s words: ‘Be *very nice* to the boy.’

“OK, Dino,” he says. “Where *do* you want to go?”



Five minutes later Tommy stops the taxi again. "Is this the place?" he asks. "That's right," answers Dino. "Can I have £20, please."

"But I don't think your mother..."

"I want £20. *Now!*"

Tommy gives Dino the money. Then he sits in the car and waits. Three hours later, Dino comes back.



“Now, are you hungry?” asks Tommy.

“Yes, I am,” answers Dino. “*Very* hungry.”

Tommy drives to Harrods. “There’s a very good restaurant in this shop,” he says.

“I don’t want to eat here!” says Dino. “I want to have lunch *there*.”

“Where?” asks Tommy. He looks across the road.



Dino goes into the Big Burger Bar with another £20.

He eats a mountain of food and drinks four milkshakes. Tommy eats his lunch in the taxi.

“£20 for lunch!” he thinks. “I can buy a week’s food with £20.” He looks out of the window and eats another sandwich.

An hour later Dino comes out of the restaurant.



“Be *very nice* to the boy,” thinks Tommy. “Do you want to go to the British Museum now?” he asks.

“OK,” answers Dino.

Tommy looks at him. “Yes?!” Tommy is very happy. He drives to the British Museum and gives Dino £10.

“Thanks,” says Dino. “Wait here.” Then he goes into a cinema across the road from the museum.



At 4.15 Dino comes out of the cinema. Tommy is sitting in the cab. He is very angry.

“Where - do - you - want - to - go - now?” he asks.

“Oh, back to The Ritz, I think,” says Dino. “I’m tired and I want to have a bath before dinner.”

“Good,” thinks Tommy.

Tommy starts the car again.



At 4.30 Tommy stops in front of the hotel. "Here we are," he says. He opens the door for Dino.

Then he sees a beautiful woman in a very expensive coat. She is walking out of The Ritz and she is looking at him.

"I know that woman," thinks Tommy. Then he remembers. "Of course, it's Gloria Brash!"



“Are you the man from TOP TAXIS?” asks Gloria. “Yes,” says Tommy. “Come with me,” says the film star. She walks back into the hotel. There, Tommy sees a boy sitting in a chair. He looks very sad.

“This is Dino,” she says.

“But, but...” Tommy can’t speak.

“I am *very* angry,” says Gloria.



Tommy looks at the boy, at the film star, and at the young boy again.

"But this *can't* be Dino!" he says.

"Young man, I know my son!" answers Gloria. "Now, where is my £50?"

Tommy's face goes white. He looks out of the window. His taxi is there, but 'Dino' is not.



It is 5.00 o'clock in the afternoon. Tommy's boss, Sam, is at home. He and his wife are having a cup of tea. The door opens and their son, Billy, walks in.

"Hello, Billy," says Sam. "Good day at school?"

Billy looks very happy.

"Yes, thanks," he says. "Very good."

Questions

- 1 What's Tommy Grant's job and who is his boss? (page 1)
- 2 Why can't Gloria Brash spend the day with Dino and Tommy? (page 2)
- 3 Why does Sam say, 'Be *very nice* to the boy, Tommy'? (page 3)
- 4 At what time does Tommy arrive at The Ritz? (page 4)
- 5 Which three places does Gloria want Dino to see? (page 4)
- 6 Where does Dino have lunch and how much money does he have to spend? (page 9)
- 7 What film does Dino go to see? (pages 10/11)
- 8 When Tommy goes back to The Ritz, Gloria is very angry. Why? (pages 13/14)

Puzzle

Buckingham Palace is in London. Can you match these other famous buildings and cities?

- | | |
|-------------------------|------------|
| 1 The Arc de Triomphe | A Rome |
| 2 The Acropolis | B Moscow |
| 3 The Kremlin | C New York |
| 4 The Coliseum | D Athens |
| 5 The Statue of Liberty | E Paris |

Ideas

- 1 Draw a map of London. Mark all the places in the story and 10 Downing Street, the River Thames, Westminster Abbey, Trafalgar Square, the Houses of Parliament.
- 2 Make a radio play of *Dino's Day in London*. Use a cassette recorder. Ask four of your friends to be Tommy, 'Dino' (Billy), Sam and Gloria.