

## Phoenix Tours

### Cast

Brenda Banks	A bullying wife
Timothy Banks	A timid husband
Harry Scott	Young man
Jade Jenkins	Young girl
Roger Wright	Hoo-ray man
Jacqueline Hurst	Mousey woman
Eva Griffin	Tarty girl
Daffyd Williams	A shepherd

## Act 1

### Scene 1

*Set somewhere in Wales*

*An old military hut, complete with straw bales, sheep poo, old packing cases, a saw horse, a step ladder.*

*A dim, blue light shows. A storm is raging. Everyone enters stage right with cases, umbrellas etc. to shelter from the rain. They complain bitterly about the weather and Perce the coach driver, who is absent. During the dialogue the characters wander about looking around and holding up mobile phones to see if they have got a signal.*

Brenda            Oh for goodness' sake. Is this it? What are we supposed to do in here?

Roger            It's better than being out in the rain isn't it?

Eva                Anyway Perce has gone for help. We probably won't be here long. There must be civilisation around here somewhere.

Brenda            Perce? Perce? I wouldn't keep your hopes up. That man is a total idiot!

Harry            Oh I think that's a little harsh.

Brenda            Do you? Well if *your* coach had broken down and you smelled petrol fumes would you have searched for the leak using a naked flame?

Harry            Well no-one had a torch.

Brenda            Well he should have had one, it's his job to be prepared for emergencies, then he wouldn't have set fire to the engine.

Roger            Oh come on – I don't suppose he did it on purpose.

Brenda            As I said, the man is a total idiot.

Harry            Well at least we got our bags off before it was too late.

Brenda            *Some* of us.

Roger            And, after all Perce did volunteer to go off and get help in this terrible weather. You have to give him some credit for that.

Brenda            Oh do be quiet Roger.

Roger            Just trying to be charitable.

Brenda            Well don't! Has anyone got a signal? *(They all hold their mobile phones in the air)*

All                No.

Brenda *(to her husband Timothy)* I cannot believe I let you persuade me to come on this God forsaken coach trip to Wales in the first place.

Tim If I remember rightly I think it was your idea, my love.

Brenda. I don't remember that. I can't imagine I would have organised this fiasco *(She gives him a fierce look)*

Tim Perhaps you're right, my memory is not what it used to be.

Jacqueline *(Turning on the light)* Oh – it works.

Roger There you are, you can always count on Jacqueline to shed a little light on the problem. Ha ha.

Brenda Oh my God! Mind where you're treading. What is that all over the floor?

Roger Well they've either got giant rabbits or sheep.

Jade Oh Harry, there's sheep poo everywhere.

Harry Well it won't hurt you. Just don't tread in it.

Jade *(Slumping on the straw bale and snivelling)* After all I went through. I thought we were going to have a romantic holiday. My Dad's not speaking to me because I came away with you and now look at us.

Harry Well my mother wasn't too happy either. She's all on her own now you know.

Jade Your mother's never happy – that's why she's always on her own. My Dad said we shouldn't go away together until we were married. I'm beginning to agree with him.

Harry Oh don't say that Hun. It'll get better I promise you.

Jade How? The coach has burned down, the driver's gone, we're in the middle of nowhere and I can't get on Facebook!

Eva I know, I don't know what's going on in the outside world. I feel completely cut off.

Roger I've got one bar! I've got one bar! *(Standing on a bale of straw They all rush to him)*  
Oh no, it's gone. Sorry. *(They all trail away again).*

Timothy You see, I'm afraid Wales has the worst mobile phone signal, according to the Which Report. It also has the highest incidence of suicide in the British Isles, not that that's relevant I suppose.

Brenda Well thank you very much, Timothy Banks, Mastermind, specialist subject "The Bleeding Obvious!" *(Timothy is crushed, Jacqueline moves to comfort him, Brenda storms away. There is an enormous thunderclap and a flash of lightning. Jade, Eva and Jacqueline squeal)*

Roger Now, now ladies, no need to be scared. The lightning can't hurt you in here. After all it's only a drop of rain and we are waterproof. We're all safe and sound in here until Perce gets back.

Jade I'm not so sure. We're very isolated here. You never know who might be lurking about.

Eva That's true – there might be some fit, young shepherd who's looking for someone to keep him warm in the long, dark nights. *(She giggles)*

Brenda Disgusting!

Roger Oh don't be like that Brenda, she's only trying to keep our spirits up aren't you Eva?

Eva A pointless task with her!

Roger Well now that we're here why don't we have a singsong? *(All groan)* Come along, who'll start us off. What about you Jacqueline?

Jacqueline *(Horried)* Oh no! Not me! I don't know any songs. I'm a librarian.

Roger Well tell us a story then (Ha Ha). I do in fact know one about an old, empty hut in Wales. Would you like to hear the story of the old, empty hut in Wales.

All No

Roger Then I'll tell you about the old, empty hut in Wales. *(He pauses and takes a deep breath)* There was nothing in it! Ha ha. *(Everyone groans)*

Eva Can anyone get Twitter?

All No.

Eva I can't even tweet then. All my friends will wonder what's happened to me. I've been tweeting every day about this trip.

Jacqueline What have you said? You haven't put anything about me have you?

Eva No, I only tweet interesting things.

Timothy I say, that's rather rude isn't it?

Eva Oh she knows I don't mean anything by it don't you Jacks?

Jacqueline Jacqueline!

Eva Whatever.

Brenda You do realise that Chantelle could have gone into labour by now and we'd know nothing about it.

Timothy She's not due for another three weeks.

Jade Oh that's nothing to go by. My sister's first baby was four weeks early. He was enormous that's why he came early. The doctor said she couldn't have gone full term 'cos he was pressing on the placenta.

Brenda You see? I could be a grandmother and we're stuck in this hell hole.

Timothy Be sensible Brenda.

Jade Well I expect I'd worry if I had a daughter who was about to give birth.

Timothy Chantelle is only a cat.

Brenda Only a cat? She is my life! She is my precious darling, my only friend and certainly the only living thing that cares a damn about me - and that includes you!

Timothy We've only been here ten minutes, my sweet. I think if Chantelle had gone into labour Peter would have let us know.

Brenda How? By carrier pigeon?

Roger Oh - good one Brenda.

Brenda That wasn't meant to be funny.

Roger Wasn't it? I'm sorry. I just can't help seeing the humour in things, that's why my name is so apt.

Brenda Roger?

Roger Yes Roger – "jolly Roger" – get it?

Harry What time do you think it gets dark around here?

Eva It's permanently dark in this storm.

Jacqueline Do you think Perce will be able to find his way back?

Brenda He couldn't find a wart on the end of his nose!

Harry I don't know why you're so down on Perce. I think he's a nice, amiable bloke.

Jacqueline He was very knowledgeable about the flora and fauna around here.

Eva The what?

Jacqueline The animals and plants.

Eva Well why didn't you say that in the first place? You're always coming out with things like that and nobody understands a word you say. No wonder you can't get a bloke.

Timothy There's nothing wrong with airing one's knowledge. I understood you Jacqueline.

Brenda Well bully for you!

Timothy He did give us an enlightening commentary on the way up here.

Brenda Yes – I now know more about sheep than I ever wanted to.

Harry It wasn't just sheep, he told us lots of other things as well.

Timothy Thank you Harry.

Brenda Has anybody got a signal yet? *(They all look at their phones)*

All No.

Roger More to the point – has anybody got any grub? I'm starving!

Brenda Oh well imagine my amazement.

Roger What?

Brenda I've never known anyone to consume so much food at one sitting.

Roger I have a healthy appetite that's all.

Brenda Is that what you call it? At breakfast this morning you ate all the bacon. Some of us didn't get any at all.

Roger Yes they did! Me! Ha Ha.

Eva I've got half a pulled pork wrap somewhere. *(She delves in her bag)* There you are Roger. *(He goes to take it but Brenda snatches it off him)*

Brenda Don't you want it?

Eva No – I've gone off pork.

Roger Oh shame!

Brenda Well I wouldn't mind finishing it – I had hardly any breakfast thanks to some people.

Eva Whatever.

Jacqueline I've got a Kit-Kat you're welcome to Roger.

Roger Oh ta very much. *(She gives it to him. Brenda looks at the chocolate then back at her wrap)* Want to swap? *(Brenda takes an enormous bite of her wrap and stalks away)* Please yourself. When did you buy that wrap anyway?

Eva The day before yesterday when we stopped at that little village with the unpronounceable name.

Roger That could be anywhere in Wales. *(He wanders off. Jade pulls Harry to one side)*

Jade What happens if we have to stay here all night?

Harry           What do you mean?

Jade            Well I'm not taking my clothes off here.

Harry           You won't have to. Anyway we'll probably be on our way long before then.

Jade            I was looking forward to spending some quality, romantic time with you getting to know you better.

Harry           I was looking forward to a lot more than that.

Jade            Sshhh! There's no need to be lewd.

Harry           Well you did promise!

Jade            No I didn't! I said perhaps, if everything was right. And it isn't!

Harry           We've been going out for four months now.

Jade            Look, I don't know what you got up to with your other girlfriends, but I'm different.

Harry           You can say that again. I've been very patient. *(He whispers)* I brought some – you know – thingies with me.

Jade            Thingies?

Harry           You know...

Jade            What?

Harry           French letters.

Jade            Pardon?

Harry           Er....Proliferacs!

Jade            If you mean prophylactics you needn't have bothered – I've been on the pill for the last six weeks.

Harry           You never said.

Jade            It's not the sort of thing you discuss right away.

Harry           Well that's nice that is, and I thought I was being responsible. So you did intend to then?

Jade            I said if everything was right and it obviously isn't right here is it?

Harry           *(to everyone)* OK everybody we've got to do something about this situation. It's no good waiting for Perce, we've got to get ourselves out of this mess.

Brenda          *(to Timothy)* Who rattled his cage? Haven't I been saying that all along. Perce is about as much use as a chocolate teapot.

Roger Well at least he knew which way to set off didn't he? I mean, I wouldn't have a clue.  
*(There is another clap of thunder – Everyone jumps).*

Eva Well I'm not setting foot outside in this!

Jacqueline Do you know it rains for 180 days of the year on average in Wales?

Brenda Did you just make that up?

Timothy Why would she make it up? She's a librarian I expect she just knows a lot of facts.

Roger Perce never told us that did he? In the brochure there were pictures of mountains in sunshine with blue sky. I haven't seen the sky since we crossed the border.

Jacqueline If you don't believe me just look on line.

Brenda Well I would if I could get a signal. Anyway how does that help us?

Jacqueline It doesn't. I just thought it was interesting that's all.

Timothy It is interesting.

Roger It's no good arguing – we could be here all night – it's best to try and get along.

Eva My God – what a prospect!

Roger I know – we could play a game.

Jade What sort of a game?

Harry Sardines?

Timothy I spy?

Jade Charades!

Jackie I've got a crossword puzzle book.

Roger Oh that reminds me – I got stuck on a clue this morning. "Overworked Postman"

Brenda How many letters?

Roger Thousands of them! *(He and Harry laugh – nobody else does)*

Eva I've got Scruples

Brenda So have we all dear.

Eva No – in my bag – I've got the travelling set of Scruples.

Jacqueline What's Scruples?

Eva Oh it's brilliant. You ask someone a moral sort of question and they have to answer and if anyone thinks they're lying they can challenge them. It's a real laugh. (*She rummages in her case*)

Jade It doesn't sound very suitable to me.

Harry Well let's give it a go first eh?

Eva Right sit round in a circle.

Brenda I'm not sitting down here!

Eva We can use our cases.

Timothy Look there's a broom here – let me sweep up all of this sh.....

Brenda Timothy!

Timothy Sheep waste. (*He gets the broom and sweeps. Eva has found the game. The rest find somewhere to sit or lob*)

Eva Right – who wants to start?

Harry I will if you like – what do I do?

Eva Take a card, look at it and decide who you want to answer the question.

Jackie Didn't we ought to read the rules first?

Eva No – it's easy – we'll just learn as we go along.

Harry OK this question is for Jade. "Someone in your office has really bad body odour – would you tell them?"

Jade Well I would go to the supervisor because I think it's her job to tell them – not mine.

Harry Oh that is a cop out!

Jade Well what would you do?

Harry I'd buy a bottle of deodorant, throw it at them and say "try using this".

Jade Oh Harry – you wouldn't!

Roger You have to more subtle than that. You line them all up, say, "Step forward all those who smell nice – not you!"

Timothy There used to be an advert on TV where people would whisper in your ear "B.O"

Jackie What did that mean?

Eva Bigger off!

Timothy No – body odour – and then the person who offended would use Lifeboy.

Brenda Oh my God!

Harry Was that for those who had just returned from the War?

Jade *(Nudging him)* Harry

Roger Yes – the Boer War!

Timothy It wasn't that long ago.

Eva Perhaps that wasn't a very good question. Who wants a go now?

Roger I'll be next. *(He takes a card)* This question is for Eva *(He leers)*. If you were accidentally confined with an attractive, mature man would you be responsive to his advances?

Eva Ooo well that would depend.....

Brenda *(snatching the card)* It doesn't say that at all. It says, "If you were walking in the fields and you came upon a snake would you (a) step aside (b) shriek and run away or (c) hit it with a stick?

Eva *(to Roger)* You devil!

Jade Answer the question.

Eva Well if it isn't doing me any harm I'd just leave it alone.

Jackie Quite right – be green.

Jade I'd run a mile – I hate snakes.

Roger Talking of snakes – where does one syphon the python here?

Brenda I beg your pardon?

Roger Well, you know, we're all human – we've all got to go.

Brenda Really!

Harry I think it's a question of going outside and adding to the raindrops mate.

Roger What out there? *(There is another thunderclap)* I think not. I'll just have to hold it. It's a bit primitive around here isn't it?

Jackie I've been on a more primitive holiday than this.

Timothy Really? Where was that?

Roger Heacham?