

**Cambridge English Readers**

.....  
**Level 2**

Series editor: Philip Prowse

*The Double Bass  
Mystery*

Jeremy Harmer

 **CAMBRIDGE**  
UNIVERSITY PRESS

PUBLISHED BY THE PRESS SYNDICATE OF THE UNIVERSITY OF CAMBRIDGE  
The Pitt Building, Trumpington Street, Cambridge CB2 1RP, United Kingdom

CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITY PRESS  
The Edinburgh Building, Cambridge CB2 2RU, United Kingdom  
40 West 20th Street, New York, NY 10011-4211, USA  
10 Stamford Road, Oakleigh, Melbourne 3166, Australia

© Cambridge University Press 1999

First published 1999

Reprinted 1999

This book is in copyright. Subject to statutory exception and to the provisions of relevant collective licensing agreements, no reproduction of any part may take place without the written permission of Cambridge University Press.

Printed in the United Kingdom at J.W. Arrowsmith Ltd, Bristol  
Typeset in 12/15pt Adobe Garamond [CE]  
Illustrations by Sam Thompson

ISBN 0 521 65613 3

# Contents

<b>Chapter 1</b>	A bit of a problem	5
<b>Chapter 2</b>	A beautiful day	7
<b>Chapter 3</b>	A newspaper, a beach	10
<b>Chapter 4</b>	The concert	14
<b>Chapter 5</b>	Screams in the night	18
<b>Chapter 6</b>	Inspector Portillo	22
<b>Chapter 7</b>	Secrets	25
<b>Chapter 8</b>	A restaurant, a fight	31
<b>Chapter 9</b>	Two men, a truck and a double bass	35
<b>Chapter 10</b>	Why did you do it?	41
<b>Chapter 11</b>	One more question	45

# People in the story



Marilyn Whittle –  
Harp

Frank Shepherd –  
Orchestra Manager

Adriana Fox –  
Violin

Martin Audley –  
Trumpet

Philip Worth –  
Conductor

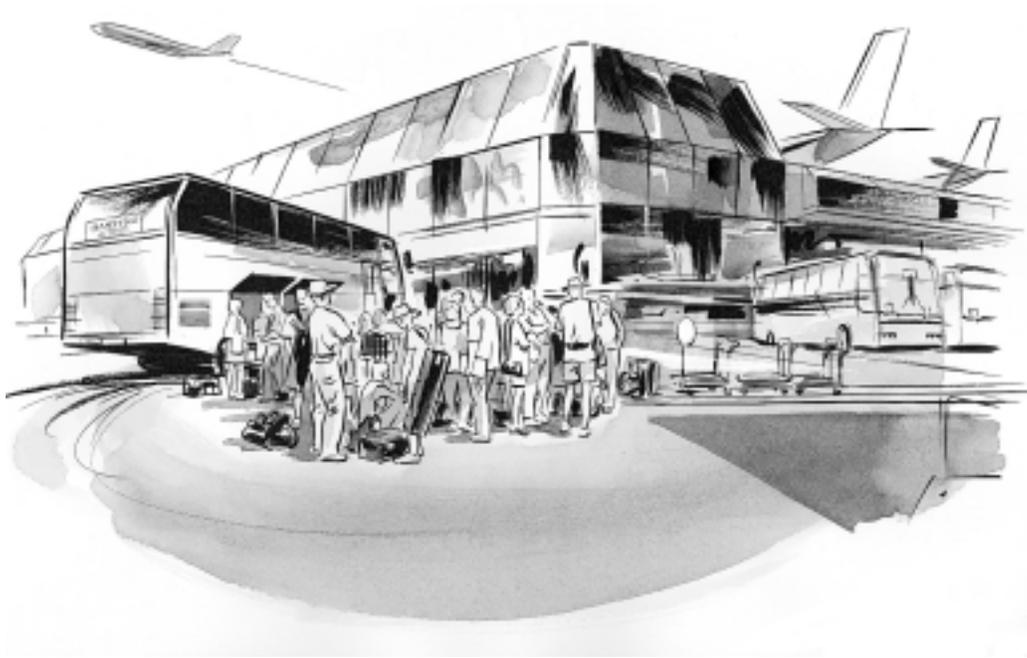
Penny Wade –  
Double Bass

Simon Hunt –  
Double Bass

Candida Ashley-Morton –  
Double Bass

Inspector Jorge Portillo

## Chapter 1 *A bit of a problem*



We came out of the airport building. All eighty-five players from the Barston Symphony Orchestra in England. The sun was shining. It was hot.

‘Welcome to Barcelona!’ Frank Shepherd said to us all. ‘Come this way. The coaches are waiting.’ We followed him. Somebody took a photograph.

The coaches left the airport and started on the motorway into Barcelona. Frank Shepherd came and sat next to me. Frank is the manager of the Barston Symphony Orchestra.

‘Penny,’ he said (that’s my name). ‘We’ve got a bit of a problem.’

‘What kind of a problem?’ I said.

‘Well, it’s your double bass,’ he said.

‘My double bass? What’s wrong with my double bass?’

‘It isn’t here. It isn’t in Barcelona.’

‘What? Where is it?’

‘I’m afraid that I just don’t know,’ Frank said.

Oh, sorry. I must tell you something about me because, well, this is my story. Actually that’s not quite true. It’s the story of a double bass too. People take things and somebody dies. But that’s for later. Now I’ll start at the beginning.

My name is Penny Wade. I am twenty-six years old. I play the double bass in the Barston Symphony Orchestra. There are eight double basses in the BSO. I am number eight. I got the job six months ago. The other seven players are all older or better than me. The trip to Spain was my first time with the orchestra in a foreign country.

‘What’s the problem?’ my friend Adriana said from the seat behind me. Adriana plays the violin in the orchestra.

‘It’s my double bass,’ I said. ‘Frank can’t find it.’

‘I’m sorry,’ Frank said. ‘We put it in the BSO truck in Barston and it wasn’t in the truck when it arrived in Barcelona.’

All the big instruments came by road. It was cheaper than taking them in a plane.

‘He says someone’s taken it,’ I told Adriana.

‘I said *perhaps* someone’s taken it,’ Frank said.

‘That’s no help at all,’ I said. I was angry. ‘*Perhaps* isn’t any good. Perhaps it fell off the truck. Perhaps someone wanted wood for their fire . . .’

‘Look,’ Adriana said. ‘This is stupid. Double basses are big. They don’t just fall off trucks.’

‘This one did,’ I said. I looked out of the window of the coach. We were arriving in Barcelona. My first foreign trip. Wonderful, don’t you think? But that’s just the problem. It wasn’t wonderful at all.