

“Why don’t you come up to my office?”

Charlie was hesitant at first. The only member of the tour still left, but what else could he do? He couldn’t wander off! Who knows what he’d find or get trapped in? He could disappear in this labyrinth of corridors forever. Duly, he lowered his head and followed Wonka without making a fuss. Charlie walked slowly as if in some kind of funeral procession. They both walked in silence until they reached the door of his office. Wonka took out his key and unlocked the door.

The door opened, and Charlie was shocked. The office was a small room with a desk right in the middle. A computer screen sat on the desk with a desk lamp on the other side. Some art decked the wall and a window looked out onto the courtyard of the factory. It was a totally normal, ordinary and boring room. After everything that Charlie had seen, he almost didn’t believe it. How could a man who had created such a fantastical world of crazy designs could have such a plain working office. Wonka sat behind his desk and gestured to the seat opposite him.

“Please sit down”. Charlie again offered no resistance to the word of Mr Wonka and sat down.

“Tell me a bit about yourself”.

What could he say? What could Charlie possibly say to this kind of man? What could possibly be interesting about him? He stammered through a few meaningless sentences before Wonka interrupted him...

“And did you like the factory?”

“Erm, yeah I really enjoyed it!”

“How would you like a job?”

Charlie wasn’t paying any attention but if either of them had looked through the window at that moment, they would have seen a pitiful sight of the rest of the tour group leaving. Leading the column was Augustus who was soaking wet and leaving a dripping trail of white milky puddles with every step he made. Violet, who in her new shrunken baby size was being pushed along by a worker in a pram, drooling and babbling away seemingly unaware of her fate. Veruca waddled along next, a little distance away from everyone as the smell from her time in the bins of dirty, spoilt, wet and tested diapers hadn’t gone away from her just yet! There was another tour member who should have been leaving, but of course it would be another year before he got out of that locked room! At least he’ll have been well looked after, and indeed think how well his ballet skills will have developed in a year!

But none of that mattered. What had been a crazy, awful day to the rest of the tour, marked a new chapter in Charlie’s life and career.