

### My earliest memory

When I was about four or five, my grandmother, who was Polish, was living (live) in London and we children often <sup>1</sup>  (spend) weekends at her flat. My grandfather <sup>2</sup>  (die) a couple of years earlier, so I suppose she was in need of company. We loved going there, as my grandmother <sup>3</sup>  (cook) special meals for us and <sup>4</sup>  (take) us for lovely walks in Regent's Park, which was quite nearby. One occasion that I remember really well was when she <sup>5</sup>  (invite) me to stay with her on my own, without my brothers and sisters. On the first day, after lunch, my grandmother <sup>6</sup>  (go) for her rest. I <sup>7</sup>  (try) to sleep too, but I couldn't, so after a while I <sup>8</sup>  (get up) and <sup>9</sup>  (decide) to explore the flat. Everything was very quiet, so I was convinced that my grandmother <sup>10</sup>  (sleep). The room I most <sup>11</sup>  (want) to explore was my grandfather's study, I imagine, precisely because she <sup>12</sup>  (tell) me not to go in there. I opened the door and went in, and was immediately drawn to his large old desk. I <sup>13</sup>  (climb) onto the chair and <sup>14</sup>  (see) on the desk a green pen in a kind of stand, with a bottle of ink. I <sup>15</sup>  (ask) my parents for a real pen for a long time, but they <sup>16</sup>  (refuse), foreseeing the mess that I was almost bound to make with the ink. I picked up the pen and then tried to open the bottle of ink. At that moment, I <sup>17</sup>  (hear) my grandmother's voice saying, 'Christina? Where are you? What are you doing?' To my horror, I <sup>18</sup>  (realize) that my grandmother <sup>19</sup>  (get up) and <sup>20</sup>  (come) towards the study. Two seconds later, she <sup>21</sup>  (open) the door. I will never forget the awful feeling of shame that she <sup>22</sup>  (catch) me doing something that she <sup>23</sup>  (forbid) me to do.