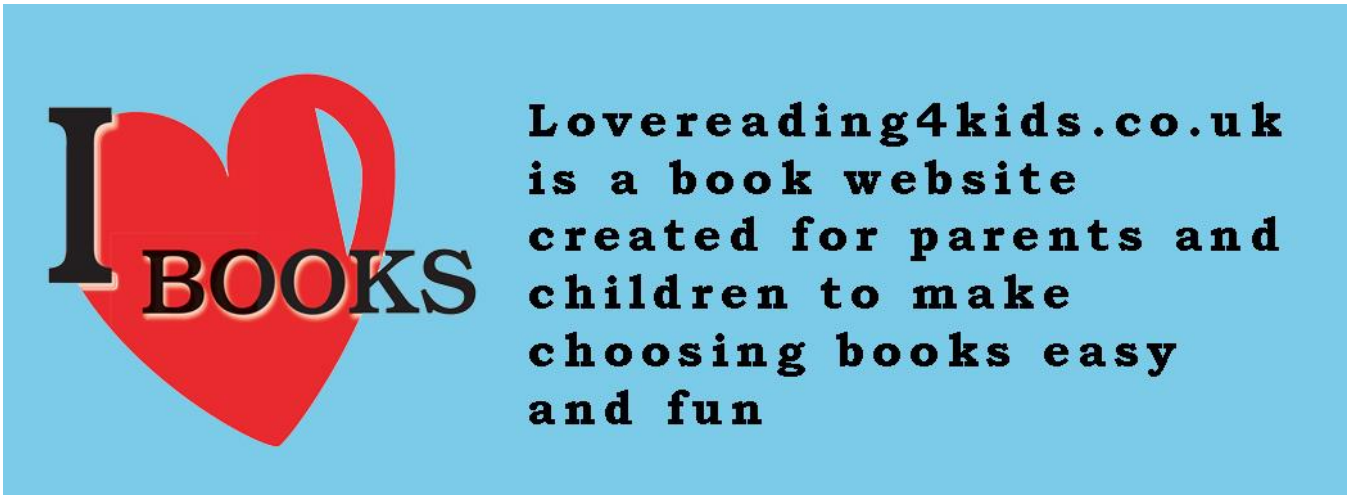


Opening extract from

Sunny Side Up

Written by

Holly Smale

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SUNNY SIDE UP

HOLLY SMALE

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Light (noun, adjective, verb)
/lʌɪt/

1 To make things visible or afford illumination

2 To set on fire

3 Pale or not deep in colour

4 Without weight

ORIGIN From the Old English *leoht* – light, shining or bright

1

My name is Harriet Manners and I am hyper.

Genki is a Japanese word that means *high energy, full of beans* or *peppy*, and I know it fits me perfectly because I haven't slept properly in six whole days.

Frankly, I haven't *needed* to.

I'm so super-charged, I'm basically a worker ant: grabbing hundreds of tiny minute-long power naps just to keep me performing as normal.

Trust me: I've got the data.

Thanks to the awesome new Sleep App on my phone, I've been able to track my nocturnal activities in detail. Statistically the average teenager needs 8.5 hours of decent rest per night, but – according to my sleep graphs – my deep sleep states have been dropping steadily for the last 144.3 hours.



Last night, in fact, I officially got no hours of proper sleep at all.

Not a single wink, let alone forty.

So it's pretty lucky that today I am firing on *all cylinders.* Giraffes can go weeks without napping, and I can only assume that I must be able to do the same now too.

Seriously: I am *buzzing.*

"*And*," I continue, stabbing a finger at the magazine in front of me, "it says here that the tunnel includes six thousand tonnes of railway tracks, which is the same weight as two thousand elephants! Isn't that cool?"

I blink at buildings rushing past the window.

"At its deepest point, it runs seventy-five metres below sea level, which is the same as 107 baguettes on top of each other! Crazy, huh?"

Frowning, I click my biro rapidly in and out again with tiny *snaps* and make a little note next to this fact. "How many fish could you get into that space, do you think? Should I try and calculate it?"

"Oooh!" I add before anyone can answer, pointing

at a squat bird on a wire. "French pigeon!"

It's been a pretty exciting journey already.

Eleven in the morning, having departed London just two hours ago, and I've already completed three Sudoku puzzles, learnt three new foreign phrases and filled out my entire crossword book in pen. I didn't even bother pencilling it in first: that's how fired-up I'm feeling.

"*Plus*," I say, my jiggling leg bumping up and down repeatedly, "did you know that the Channel Tunnel is the longest under-sea tunnel *in the world*? Doesn't that just completely blow your—"

"Harriet?" a loud voice says from some way behind me. "Treacle-top, who the fiddlesticks are you talking to?"

I blink a few times.

Then – with a lurch of surprise – I spin round.

My modelling agent Wilbur is standing at the other end of the packed Eurostar train carriage wearing a fluffy green jumper covered in sequins, a pale lilac scarf covered with pink rabbits and neon-yellow trousers.

In one hand is a tray with two hot drinks on it and in the other is an enormous golden croissant.

Blankly, I turn to the seat next to me.

There's a large purple suitcase with a bright blue fake-fur coat draped over it and a wide-brimmed, orange-feathered hat perched on top.

Oh my God: you have *got* to be kidding me.

At what precise point in this conversation did Wilbur get up and go to the buffet car without me?

Exactly how long have I been publicly monologuing at a pile of accessories?

Ugh. Up to now, the jellyfish was the largest animal on the planet without a brain.

I think we have a new winner.

"Umm," I stammer as the young French couple behind me start quietly giggling. *Cover your tracks, Harriet.* "Hey there, Wilbur. I was just reading this magazine to the… uh… pigeon outside. He looked… lonely."

"Well of course he does, darling," Wilbur agrees chirpily, swinging into the spare seat opposite. "They're the rats of the sky, and who wants to date that?"

Then he holds out one of the coffees from the tray, pauses slightly and swings it back again. "On second

thoughts, poodle, I think you've had *quite* enough caffeine for one morning. You're starting to look like the victim at the start of a horror movie."

Typical. First you're given caffeine for the second time in your entire life, and then you're suddenly being cut off at the source with no explanation at all.

I might be shaking and sweating slightly from the end of my nose, but I am *fine.*

Wilbur puts a gentle hand on my still-kicking foot until it stops, calmly takes my still-clicking pen off me and puts the Eurostar magazine away, from where I'm now folding and unfolding the corners repeatedly.

"*Breathe,* possum," Wilbur smiles, patting my hand and proffering the golden croissant instead. "You've got this, munchkin, and you're not a baby mouse: there's no need to take in oxygen that fast."

I swallow and stare out of the train window as we rush past another French station and one more surge of adrenaline, fear, apprehension and excitement blasts through me. I never said what *kind* of energy I've been packed to the brim with all week, did I?

||

Nervous, mainly.

Include the significant quantities of central nervous system stimulating methylxanthine alkaloid I've imbibed this morning (caffeine), and I'm basically powering off raw natural chemicals like a sleep-deprived rocket.

I'm fine I'm fine I'm fine I'm—

"*Mesdames et messieurs*," a calm female voice says as the Eurostar begins to pull into the enormous, cathedral-like Gard du Nord. "*Je l'espère vous avez eu un voyage agréable. S'il vous plaît que vous prenez vos bagages avec vous. Bienvenue a Paris.*"

And that's the *main* reason I haven't been able to sleep solidly for over a hundred and forty hours.

Why I've been lying on my back, staring at the glow-in-the-dark galaxy on my ceiling while my brain spins in tight little circles, like a dying neutron star.

Three little words, three long days, one huge city.

Yup.

I'm doing *Paris Fashion Week*.