

# what's your story?

## AN ENGLISH LESSON

My husband Carmen was renovating a 10,000-square-foot, historically-certified residence in Philadelphia's Society Hill. Our client wanted to maintain the integrity of the period and insisted on historically accurate reproduction plumbing fixtures. An order for the extremely high-end bathtub faucet was placed with a company from England.

Shortly after the order arrived, our plumber, Mike Rancitelli, asked Carmen to help him install the surface-mount shower fixture. They were experiencing some difficulties trying to install the fixture. They had all the contents of the box spread across the bathroom floor and were hard at work.

At first, like typical men, they tried to complete the assembly without the instructions. After some time without any progress, Mike decided that he would read the instructions out loud and Carmen would look for the parts and put it together. After about a half hour of slow progress, Mike

told Carmen that the instructions called for a T-break. Carmen started to look for the part. After a short search, Carmen told Mike that he didn't know what a T-break was. Mike looked him right in the eye and said, "You know, a T-break!"

Carmen replied that he still had absolutely no idea what a T-break was. Again, Mike

repeated, "You know, a T-break!" with a huge emphasis on "T." Carmen, frustrated that he was wasting his valuable time on this project, hollered at Mike to stop playing around and just tell him what a T-break was.



At that point, Mike leaned over and pointed to Item Number 12 in the instruction manual which had a picture of a tea cup with steam coming out of it and the words printed below: "You're almost done now. It's time for a "tea break!"

Needless to say, Carmen and Mike started laughing hysterically, shouting back and forth to one another with English accents. They then read the instructions all the way to the end where it further stated to take another tea break with another picture icon of a tea cup. The instructions congratulated them by telling them that they did a great job and that it was now time to take another tea break, which caused them both to erupt into more fits of laughter!

*Anna Maria and Carmen Vona run Carmana Designs, LTD, in Philadelphia, Pa.*

Anna Maria and Carmen Vona, received \$100 for having their submitted story chosen and published. If you have a strange or amusing jobsite story, we want to hear from you. Simply e-mail a short story of roughly 300 words about your encounter to Sean Ruck, editorial coordinator, at [sruck@nkba.org](mailto:sruck@nkba.org) or fax your story to 908-852-1695. Those who have their story chosen for publication will receive \$100 for their contribution.

