

Edith is in her office. It is mid-morning.

The telephone rings.

It is Jane.

“Hello Edith. Something has come up that might well be of interest to you.”

“Ah. Good morning.”

“Gigantic Business is holding a press conference tomorrow morning for a new product, the Locomotive. It seems to be like a large screen mobile telephone, a smartphone, but it has a button keypad like a basic mobile telephone. There is due to be a demonstration of it at the press conference.”

“That sounds interesting.”

“Yes, but there is more, the publicity stuff has ‘You’ve heard of talking over the garden fence, now you can communicate over the language barrier using InterJollies, over five hundred fun sentences that you can send in your own language and the recipient gets the display in their own language.’ and then there is an asterisk and at the bottom of the page the asterisk has ‘Ten languages currently available.’, which sounds somewhat like localizable sentences, though you say through the language barrier and they say over the language barrier and you do not use ‘their’ when you mean ‘his or her.’” chuckles Jane.

“Well it does sound very similar in concept, though not necessarily in content!” says Edith with a laugh. “I would love to go to hear what is said - and to see what is demonstrated.”

“Alas, it is strictly accredited journalists only, it asks for people to be ready to have credentials checked - Melanie has asked me to go along.”

“I would be very interested to know what is said.”

“Yes - there is more, the invitation says that devices will be on sale at only eighty pounds each so that people can try them out before the public launch. A maximum of two per journalist, presumably they are allowing two so that people can try out sending and receiving what they call InterJollies. I am not technical myself, but would you like me to get two for you - I could bring them tomorrow afternoon if you like.”

“Yes please, I shall of course reimburse you for the money.”

“It says that they are available in a range of colours but does not say which colours. Do you have any preference.”

“Well, if they have yellow and pink one of each would be good, but whatever are the colours available - please bring two anyway, whatever you can get please.”

“Yes certainly, yellow and pink if possible, but bring something whatever the colours. Two different colours if possible?”

“Yes please”

“But bring two even if they are the same colour, yes?”

“Yes please.” says Edith with a laugh.

Edith continues “The name ‘Locomotive’ is interesting: I wonder why they have chosen that name.”

“Well, it does sound different. I will try to find out tomorrow. Maybe they will say or maybe someone will ask - if not I’ll try to ask if I get the chance to ask a question.”

“Thank you.” says Edith.

Edith is just about to contact John and let him know when the telephone rings.

“Excuse me ma’am, there is a gentleman on the telephone who says his name is Simon Eastleigh and that he is a journalist at Trade Magazine.”

“Yes, please put him through.

“Edith Gatford, how may I help?”

“Good morning, my name is Simon Eastleigh and I am a journalist at Trade Magazine and I have been asked by the Editor to attend a press conference for a new product tomorrow. The thing is this is my first job after getting my degree and I don’t really know a lot about it and one of the staff here said that your organization does work in that sort of field and so I wondered if I could possibly come and visit you and try to learn something about it all before the press conference.”

“So really that means this afternoon. That is possible for us, but it is a bit of a journey and you need time to get here.” says Edith.

“Ah yes. I’ve got a car.”

“Well, would 4 pm give you enough time to have an early lunch and then get here at a leisurely pace?”

“Err yes yes please.”

“Very well, 4 pm for a meeting with one of our experts in the technology. Do you know where we are located?”

“Well, not exactly, but I have the address and the postcode and I have a satellite navigation system.”

“They do not all include us, so if not, you could search for a restaurant named La Flava Floro that is not far away.”

“Ah, thank you.”

Edith is telling John and Edward about the two telephone calls.

Edith asks John to provide a demonstration using the research equipment, an explanation and to answer technical questions, but not to get involved in any way in a discussion about Gigantic Business and its new product, lest he be quoted, perhaps out of context.

Edith asks Edward to drive over to La Flava Floro for about 3 pm in case Simon Eastleigh arrives asking for directions so that Edward can lead the way to the research centre.

“Please take your official staff card with you and provide identification even if not asked to do so.” adds Edith. “If he arrives here directly I will telephone you to let you know that you can come back. I will ring Julia to let her know what is going on.”

“Right, fine.” says Edward.

Afternoon. Just before 3:30 pm.

Edward telephones Edith to say that Simon Eastleigh has arrived at La Flava Floro and that they are having afternoon tea and that they hope to arrive at the research centre in good time for the 4 pm meeting. Edith thanks Edward and then informs John.

Just before 4 pm. Edward and Simon arrive at the research centre. Edith greets them and introduces Simon to John.

John shows Simon the research demonstrations that are being produced and answers a number of questions about the research project for nearly an hour.

Simon then thanks John and leaves, with John accompanying him to the car park.

Later.

Edith is asking John about the meeting.

“Oh it all went very well, he did not ask me anything nor indeed did he say anything about Gigantic Business and their product launch, so he was very diplomatic about it all.”

“Excellent.” replies Edith.

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