

The next morning.

Edith has had a restless night, waking up several times and going over in her mind what has happened.

Now, Edith has just woken up and it is time to get up.

'I must apologise to Caroline.' thinks Edith. 'She had no reason to know why I was investigating and maybe thinks it is all just about receiving a private phone call - and probably thinks me very unreasonable - and then John accused me of being a matchmaker while she was there. That was quite a heated discussion with John afterwards, I lost my temper, maybe I am wondering about my motives for having that lunch with David. Yes, I must apologise to Caroline first thing and hope that that is the end of it. But what to say.... if I say that I wondered if she was talking to the press that could make it far worse. Well, just say that I am sorry, I did not mean to interfere and that we were wondering if a journalist was trying to get a story out of someone - that does not sound like I am suggesting that she or does it?'

8:50 am

Edith is in the foyer of the research centre, waiting for Caroline to arrive. Georgina is at the reception desk. Georgina starts earlier than most staff so as to be ready to deal with any early enquiries.

Edith sees Caroline arrive in the car park and park her car.

Caroline walks towards the building.

Caroline enters the building.

"Good morning Caroline, could I have a quick word in my office please?"

"No."

"What?" asks Edith, who is surprised at this response.

"I said no, I will not meet with you in your office unaccompanied."

"Caroline!" says Edith, in shocked surprise rather than annoyance.

Georgina notices what is happening.

Caroline goes through the door to her right, on her way to the computing laboratory, which is in the opposite direction to Edith's office.

Edith, somewhat embarrassed, looks towards Georgina, who manages to keep a plain look as if she has not heard the exchange, though clearly she has heard.

Later, Edith is in her office, talking to John.

Edith has told John everything that has happened.

“What do you suggest I do?” asks Edith “Bearing in mind that if I had listened to you that I would not be in this situation, but this is where I am.”

“Well,” says John “shall I invite both Caroline and Georgina to a meeting with you for the stated purpose of you apologising making it clear that I will be at the meeting as well.”

“That sounds like a good idea, you stuck up for Caroline in the meeting yesterday so she may be happy if both you and Georgina are also there.”

“I’ll see what I can do. Say, 3 pm?”

“Yes, fine.”

3 pm

Edith’s office.

Edith is behind her desk and John and Caroline are sat where they sat yesterday and Georgina is sat in the chair that is two seats nearer the door from Caroline.

“Thank you all for attending. I have requested this meeting because I would like to apologise to both of you for what happened yesterday. What happened was that an article appeared in The Daily Newspaper yesterday morning and I wondered if a journalist had rung anyone here to try to get information. Unfortunately, I saw the personal call to Caroline listed and I, well, frankly I jumped to the wrong conclusion. I regret my actions, frankly I feel quite stupid about it all. Unfortunately the caller had been David Evans and that led to well, difficulties.”

There is silence.

“Do you accept my apology?”

There is silence.

“Caroline?”

Caroline speaks “Well, you have not actually made an apology yet.”

Edith looks at John with a rather puzzled expression.

Edith realizes that the smile on John’s face means ‘Well, you haven’t have you.’”

Edit pauses.

“Caroline, I apologise for my behaviour yesterday.”

“Georgina, I apologise for my behaviour yesterday.”

“Thank you,.” says Caroline.

“Thank you.” says Georgina.

There is a silence.

John speaks "Well thank you everybody for coming, I think I need to get back to the computing laboratory."

John stands.

Caroline and Georgina both take the hint and stand.

John motions with his right hand, palm upward, for the two ladies to leave first.

Caroline walks to the door, then turns, and says "Thank you ma'am."

Georgina follows Caroline's lead and turns and says "Thank you ma'am."

Both leave the office.

"Well, it's back to the computing laboratory then." says John.

"John, I think that I should apologise to you as well."

John smiles, with a look that means, 'Well, go on then, please proceed.'

"John, I apologise for my behaviour yesterday."

"Thank you ma'am." says John.

Edith realizes that this is John's way of saying that the matter is all over and finished, as he has never addressed her as 'ma'am' before.

"Thank you John." says Edith, and smiles.

After they have all gone and Edith is alone, she stands, turns to her left and walks around the office. As she is about three-quarters of the way round the office, she glances out of the window which is in the wall to her right when she is seated behind her desk.

About ten metres away is a software unicorn, facing her, gently nodding.

Edith smiles. She knows she has done the right thing.

The software unicorn turns and walks back to the meadow.