

The next morning. Edith is in her office.

The telephone rings.

“Edith Gatford.”

It is Jane Hove.

“I have been taken off the story about the supermarket and am being sent to a student fashion show miles south of London. Second year students, not even a final degree show! Did you get me taken off the supermarket story?”

“Not directly.”

“Don’t give me any of your politician-talk. Be direct for once! The Editor said nothing about it all, but I can’t help thinking that you had something to do with it.”

“Well, I simply rang the Editor of Arts Magazine, told her what had happened and asked that she instruct you to cease and desist from investigating what I do when I am off-duty.”

“Cease and desist! Instruct! That is very excessive Edith. I thought I was a friend. Edith, you can be so irritating at times.”

“You are a friend, but what you said was said as part of your paid activity as an employee. I gave you half an hour to ring back and retract and that would have been an end of the matter. But you did not, so I acted to protect my privacy. Investigating what I do when I am off-duty for your story was not in the Public Interest - I hope you know the difference between what interests the public and the Public Interest.”

“Of course I do!”

“Well, if you know”

A pause.

“Yes you are right. I thought yesterday that I would ring you today and apologise and I was going to, then I got called to the Editor's office and taken off that task and given this assignment.”

“Where are you now?”

“In a layby on the way to the college.”

“Well, have a good trip, and remember that some of today's students may be the fashion leaders of the future.”

“Yes, you're right, and I apologise for what I said yesterday I realized almost immediately afterwards that I was wrong.”

“Well, thank you, I accept your apology and let's forget about it.”

“Right, bye.”

“Bye.”

Mid-afternoon. Edith is in her office.

The telephone rings.

“Edith Gatford.”

It is Jane Hove. Jane is very upbeat.

“I've been to the fashion show and it was great. One of the students had four outfits, one for each season and on them were text phrases, on the one for spring there was ‘It is spring.’ in about seven different languages. There was English, French, I think one was Italian. I didn't recognise the others. Well, I asked her afterwards whether she had thought of including a language-independent symbol too. She was wondering what I meant and so I showed her your webspace on my computer and she was fascinated and said that she was interested in doing that. So I, in conjunction with her, am writhing an article for *Arts Magazine* on that.”

“Excellent.”

“Anyway, she asked me something and I did not know the answer so I promised to ask you. She thought that the glyphs would look too heavy at a larger size mixed in within the lettering on the fabric. So she wondered if thinner lines could be used at larger sizes. The letters are about two inches tall for letters within an ascender. So the symbols might be, say, an inch and a half tall.”

“Well, I know what I think, but I will ask the researchers without expressing any opinion and see what they say. When do you need to know by?”

“Well, press day is next Wednesday, so noon on Monday would be fine, Tuesday at the latest?”

“I'll see what I can do.”

“Thank you, bye.”

“Bye.”

John and the other researchers are in the common room.

“So, the Secretary-General has asked if we can discuss it and try to produce a consensus view and she will hold a meeting at 10:00 am on Monday and issue a statement in the webspace and a press release by noon on Monday.”

“Won't Jane Hove be annoyed that she is not getting an exclusive?”, asks Edward.

“Well, hopefully not, but the fact of the matter is that *Arts Magazine* is a paid-for magazine and although some articles are free online, most of the online issue is behind a pay-wall and the fact of the matter is that our work is published as open source, simultaneously for everyone to know about and apply if they so choose, so no exclusives on policy decisions, no exceptions.”

“Ah, yes, I should have realized.”

“So,” says John “what do you all think please?”

“Well, I think that it alright to have thinner lines for some applications, such as to go within the larger lettering on the dress fabric, but not generally, if, say, a symbol were used for signage on a wall”, opines Henry.

“What if one is using handwriting with a pen, the lines would be thinner then”, adds Caroline.

“Or using a marker pen to make quick, hand-written signs, quite large signs, using a piece of cardboard, such as for ‘Welcome.’ and ‘Thank you for visiting.’?” asks Mariposa.

“I suppose,” says John, “that if the shape is ikmathic in relation to the original glyph it does no harm.”

“Ikmathic - I don't know the word”, asks Mariposa.

Henry replies. “It's a new word, it means ‘contains adequate information of, ... so, if for example the glyph for ‘Good day.’, which contains a circle and a straight line, was, say, drawn using a pen and the circle came out as an ellipse, then as long as it was not that different from the original glyph it could still be regarded as having the same meaning as the original glyph. But, if, say, it had a corner in it rather than being all smooth, well, there could be doubt as to whether it was intended to be a circle, as some glyphs with a different meaning have a square instead of a circle.”

“Thank you”, says Mariposa.

There is general agreement that thinner lines are alright when appropriate, at whatever size, but that the definitive glyphs remain as they are and can still be used at larger sizes too. So the agreement is that thinner lines are permitted, but are not at all a requirement and not always appropriate.

Caroline decides to try to make a font of the glyphs for the four sentences about the seasons, but decides to say nothing until she has produced it.