

Tuesday morning.

Edith, John, Edward and Mariposa arrive at the conference centre., having again travelled from the hotel in Tours where they are staying.

People are chatting.

Edith notices Jane Hove, Simon Eastleigh and the elderly retired journalist from The New York Newspaper amongst the attendees.

Jim arrives and heads into the main meeting room, everyone else follows and people settle, ready for the first lecture.

Jim speaks. "Good morning everyone, thank you for attending. Our first lecture today is on a new technique, called"

Jim hesitates. Edith winces.

"Augmentable Phrases."

Edith is relieved, for a moment she thought

'I expect he did that for effect, to scare me, to show his influence', thinks Edith.

Jim continues. "This is the first of two lectures on the same topic so perhaps we could have questions on both lectures after the second lecture, but we can all applaud after each lecture to show our appreciation to the speakers."

The Managing Director of Enormous Telephones gives his lecture.

There is applause, more than just a polite round of applause, people are clearly interested.

Jim introduces the second lecture and The Managing Director of Gigantic Business commences his lecture.

"Good morning. My lecture consists of a presentation of a demonstration of Augmentable Phrases in action, so, as messages need a person as a sender and a person as a recipient I have asked someone to assist me in the presentation."

'Oh yes,' thinks Edith, 'talk about the hereditary principle!'

"So, can I introduce the lady who will assist me, Ms Caroline Ruralby."

There is polite applause as Caroline Ruralby moves from the rear of the room to stand facing the audience.

'Oh!' thinks Edith, who is somewhat surprised that Caroline Ruralby has travelled to the conference. Edith had thought that Caroline Ruralby was still at the LocSARA research centre.

'What is going on?' thinks Edith.

The lecture proceeds.

There is applause as the lecture ends.

“So,” says Jim, “does anyone have any questions please?”

A journalist speaks. “Can the lady from Gigantic Business say if she has been involved in the industrial espionage of Gigantic Business in obtaining the list of codes from the Enormous Telephones research centre?”

There is murmuring in the audience. Jim looks concerned.

Jim speaks, “Well, I am not sure that that is a reasonable question to put to the lady, a question such as that should be directed to the Managing Director of Gigantic Business, not to a person assisting him.”

“It’s alright, I’ll answer”, says Caroline Ruralby.

Caroline continues. “The premise of your question is ill-founded, there is no industrial espionage. The list of codes for Augmentable Phrases that are in use here today were developed at the LocSARA research centre in England. I am there as an observer for Gigantic Business and I sent the list to my employer as my role is to observe and report back to my employer. I pay tribute to the Secretary-General of LocSARA, who is here today, for overseeing the project and indeed for devising the term Augmentable Phrases’.

“Oh!” says the journalist, “Is there an observer from Enormous Telephones there too?”

“I am currently based at the LocSARA research centre, as an observer for Gigantic Business.”

“You have not answered my question!”

“You are correct in your statement that I have not answered your question.”

There is murmuring in the audience.

“So can I ask the Managing Director of Enormous Telephones if Enormous Telephones has an observer at LocSARA?”

Jim speaks. “You have already had two questions, I think it is only fair that someone else gets a chance to ask a question.”

The journalist scowls at Jim. There is murmuring in the audience.

Edith notices that the Managing Director of Enormous Telephones is looking a little on edge as if he is concerned in case he is asked directly.

Edith speaks. “Perhaps it will help if I mention that at the conference that took place in Mainz that I offered to allow interested companies to send an observer to LocSARA for as long a period as they chose. Some companies have chosen to do that.”

The journalist calls out directly to Edith. “Is one of them from Enormous Telephones?”

“I cannot, I will not, discuss individual cases.”

“Oh, so there is then!”

“I did not say one way or the other.”

There is murmuring in the audience.

The journalist speaks directly to the Managing Director of Enormous Telephones. “Is there an observer from Enormous Telephones at LocSARA? Is that from where you got the list of code numbers, not from your research centre as you claimed?”

“I am not willing to answer that question as there are privacy issues involved.”

Mariposa speaks. “It’s alright sir, you can say that I am the observer from Enormous Telephones that is at the LocSARA research centre.”

The Managing Director is surprised and relieved, as although he knew that he had given instructions to send an observer to LocSARA he did not know for certain that that had happened or who had been sent and had not connected sending an observer to LocSARA with the Augmentable Phrases development, which he had been told had been originated in the Enormous Telephones research division.

“Thank you ma’am for waiving your privacy in the interests of the company”, says the Managing Director of Enormous Telephones, as if he knew all along that she was the observer and that she was present.

Mariposa smiles graciously.

“So,” says Jim, “that resolves that issue. May I ask your name please ma’am?”

“Mariposa Prynter. My surname is spelled with a letter ‘y’, not a letter ‘i’.”

“Thank you,” says Jim “I suggest we all go for mid-morning refreshments now.”

The conference continues for the rest of the day and on the following day.