



Coffee and Sauerkraut

The look that the girl gave Thomas Schmitt was almost deadly. She was wearing her blonde hair in a ponytail, bright-red lipstick, and thick, black mascara. Angela Haffner was clearly **offended** by what Thomas had said. She looked him in the eye and waited for a reply.

An uncomfortable atmosphere filled the room. The group of colleagues looked at each other. Everyone was waiting for someone else to speak.



offended	beleidigt
awkward	<i>hier:</i> unangenehm
intern	Praktikantin
to spoil	verderben

It was meant to be a joke, Thomas thought to himself.

But Angela was clearly not amused by the suggestion that she and other Berliners needed to “lighten up and learn how to have a good time”. He searched his head for something to say to break the **awkward** silence.

“Sorry, Angela, I... er... I didn’t realize you...”

“It’s okay,” the young German **intern** answered. “I know you were only joking, but I get so sick of all the clichés: orderly Germans, no sense of humour and an obsession with punctuality. I thought you would understand? I mean, you’re German, too.”

Thomas began to answer, but Angela interrupted him.

“Forget it,” she said with a sigh. “I’m overreacting. It’s been a long day. I shouldn’t have said that carnival was childish and stupid. Don’t let me **spoil** your fun.”

Thomas and Angela were both **employees** of Chrimarsan Sauerkraut Ltd. They were standing in the hallway of their office in Oxford among a group of co-workers. Most were putting on their coats and preparing to step outside into the bitter cold of a mid-January Friday evening. Angela was right: it had been a very long day. It was after ten o'clock in the evening and the team had spent the whole day rushing to put together an important **sales pitch**.

"Well, I think it's a great idea, Tom," said George Ratcliffe, one of the managers. "**Fancy dress** and German beer – what better way to celebrate your fortieth birthday? So carnival is a big thing for you, isn't it?"

"It's huge," Thomas replied, relieved by George's enthusiasm. "Especially back in Cologne. A huge parade goes through the city on Rose Monday. And because my birthday's on Rose Monday this year, I just thought..."

"It would be the perfect opportunity to celebrate both events together?" George asked, finishing Thomas's sentence.

The **ginger-haired Geordie** playfully punched Thomas on the arm and smiled.

The other colleagues nodded in agreement and laughed. Thomas was glad that he could **rely on** George to lighten the mood.

"I can't wait!" said another voice in a **camp**, excited tone.

It was Ewan O'Brian, the **Accounts Manager**.

"What should I wear?" he continued.



employee	Mitarbeiter
sales pitch	Angebot (Vertrieb)
fancy dress	Verkleidung
ginger-haired	rothaarig
Geordie	Person aus Newcastle
to rely on sb.	sich auf jmd. verlassen
camp	affektiert, übertrieben
Accounts Manager	Leiter der Buchhaltung

Übung 1: Match-up. Welche der folgenden Wörter gehören zusammen? Ordnen Sie zu!

- | | |
|-------------------------------------|------------------|
| 1. <input type="checkbox"/> spoil | a) the mood |
| 2. <input type="checkbox"/> lighten | b) the whole day |
| 3. <input type="checkbox"/> break | c) the silence |
| 4. <input type="checkbox"/> spend | d) the fun |

“Wear whatever you like,” Thomas answered. “I’m sure you could make use of your red trousers. Or your cowboy boots? As long as it’s fancy dress, fun and...”

“Fabulous?” Ewan asked. “Oh, don’t you worry, Thomas. Whatever I wear, it will definitely be fabulous.”

The employees laughed again. It was a typical comment from the Accounts Manager, whose sense of fashion made a decorated Christmas tree look rather **dull**. Angela, too, was laughing. The uncomfortable moment had passed, and Thomas was happy that his idea had caught his colleagues’ imagination.

Now, with their coats zipped up tight, the group moved towards the door and began to stream outside. When Angela Haffner had left the building, Thomas caught George Ratcliffe’s attention.

“Thanks for your enthusiasm, George. You managed to rescue me from quite an embarrassing situation.”

George laughed, showing his big, white teeth. “No problem.”

“I’m still learning the rules of office politics. I’ve only been here for four months. It’s different to the German **branch**.”

dull

branch



eintönig

hier: Zweigstelle

“Yes, but you’ve spent those four months as Marketing Manager. In a position like that, politics really matter.”

It was true, and Thomas knew it. His **objective** was to **persuade** the Brits that sauerkraut was the new fish and chips. To be successful, he first had to create a comfortable working atmosphere and gain his team’s trust.

“Aren’t you coming with us?” George asked when he saw that Thomas had no coat on. “You’ve put in enough hours this week.”

“I need to add the final details to my presentation, I’m afraid. I just want to get it finished. Alexander won’t be happy if it’s late.”



objective
to persuade

Ziel
überzeugen

“Well, don’t stay too long. It’s not good for you.”

“I won’t,” Thomas replied, then said goodbye to his colleague.

As he walked back to his desk, he breathed a sigh of relief. George had believed his lie. He hated lying to him, but it was the only way.

Übung 2: Question tags. Wie lautet das korrekte Frageanhängsel?

1. It’s different from the German branch, _____ ?
2. You’re coming, _____ ?
3. It will definitely be fabulous, _____ ?
4. I’ve worked long enough, _____ ?

Back at his desk, Thomas switched off his computer without doing any more work. He picked up his briefcase and **headed straight to** Alexander Green's office.

"Can I offer you a coffee or dessert, madam, sir?" the waiter asked.

Inspector James Hudson smiled at the beautiful woman sitting opposite him. There was a low-burning candle between them.

"Raphaela, it's your decision."

"The desserts look very appetizing, but I'm so full after the lasagne, I don't think I could manage one," the woman answered.

"Do you **fancy** a coffee, James?"

"Yes, I think I do. I'll have an espresso, please," Hudson said to the waiter.

"Make that two," the woman added with a charming smile.

It had been a very enjoyable meal, and a perfect first date. Even so, part of Hudson's mind was still on the job, thinking over the details of a case he was currently investigating. He hated the fact that his mind always turned back to work, even on a delightful evening like this. Miss Paddington, his housekeeper, was always telling him that he needed to switch off more often. He usually replied that being switched on around the clock was part of his job. But, he knew, if ever there was a time to put work to one side, it was this evening.

He had met Raphaela on the Internet after creating a profile on the **lonely hearts section** of the London Times website. At first, he had been sceptical about such a modern approach to dating. However, he became much more optimistic after



to head straight to

direkt zugehen auf

↩ to fancy sth.

Lust auf etw. haben

lonely hearts section

Kontaktanzeigen



lecturer in neuroscience

Dozentin der Neurowissenschaften

forward

hier: vorlaut

to make it

es schaffen

strand

Strähne

modest

zurückhaltend

to exceed

übertreffen

chatting to Raphaela, a **lecturer in neuroscience** at Oxford University. She had shown only positive qualities over the Internet – intelligence, a good sense of humour and a strong personality. And she had a certain *je ne sais quoi* which Hudson had looked forward to

discovering on their first date.

The waiter arrived with the coffees and left the pair to enjoy their final drink of the evening.

“I hope you don’t think I’m being too **forward**,” Raphaela said, taking a small sip from her cup, “but it would be lovely to see you again, James. Will you be able to **make it** to Oxford again soon?” Her bright-green eyes seemed to shine with excitement, and she brushed a **strand** of her dark-brown bob behind her ear.

Hudson gave a **modest** smile. He had had high expectations of the date, and Raphaela had more than **exceeded** them.

Übung 3: Placing restaurant orders. Ergänzen Sie die Bestellungen mit den angegebenen Verben!

have

make

like

may

1. I’d the apple pie, please.
2. Please I have the mushroom soup?
3. that another white wine, please.
4. I’ll a cappuccino, please.