A Night at the Hostel (B1 · English B1)

Tekst / Transcript

Marek took a summer job at a small hostel near the harbour. The building was old and, to be honest, rather ugly from the outside, with grey walls and broken lamps. Inside, however, it was clean and warm, and the guests were friendly. His shift started at ten in the evening and finished at six in the morning. After two weeks he was used to sleeping in the afternoon, though his friends thought this was strange.

His main duty was to sit at the desk, answer the phone and give people their keys. He also had to check the rooms. Most of the furniture was used, bought cheaply from a hotel that had closed, but nobody complained. One night a guest came back very late and very drunk. He could not find his own room, and he tried to open three wrong doors. Marek walked him upstairs and put a bottle of water upon the little table beside his bed. In the morning the man apologised twice and paid for the broken lamp.

Another evening was stranger. A young couple arrived and said their payment was due the next day, because their bank card had stopped working. Marek believed them and let them stay. Then he noticed that they kept looking at the cupboard behind the desk. He remembered the manager's warning about an old trick that thieves sometimes used: one person asks a long question while the other takes the keys. Marek stayed calm and moved the keys into a drawer. The couple left quietly and, surprisingly, paid the full price within two days.

The funniest night came in August. A guest ran down the stairs at three in the morning, wearing only his underwear, and shouted that there was smoke in the corridor. Marek grabbed the fire extinguisher and almost dropped it on the floor. In the end, the smoke came from a toaster that somebody had left on in the kitchen. Everybody stood outside for twenty minutes, laughing in the warm night air. When Marek finished the job in September, the manager wrote him an excellent letter, and Marek felt proud of every strange night.

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