A Festival on the Cliff Road (B2 · English B2)

Tekst / Transcript

When Marek agreed to organise the summer music festival, he imagined a pleasant field, a stage and a few hundred visitors. What he got instead was a hillside, a budget that shrank every week, and a phone that never stopped ringing. The chosen venue was an old quarry above the sea, reached only by a narrow cliff road. From below, the grey rock face rose in one almost vertical wall, which the local climbing club adored and the safety inspectors did not.

Marek travelled there for the first time in April, driving up via two villages and a bridge that looked older than the quarry itself. At the top he found a vast open space, far bigger than the photographs had suggested, with the whole bay visible in the distance. He stood there for several minutes without speaking. In that very moment he understood why the previous organiser had fallen in love with the place, and also why she had eventually given up.

The practical problems were endless. Ticket prices had to vary depending on the day, since Saturday would attract three times as many people as Thursday. The sound engineer explained that variations in wind speed could ruin the acoustics near the cliff edge. Marek's first plan for the stage layout turned out to be completely useless, because the ground sloped in the wrong direction. He redrew it four times. Two of the headline bands were coming from abroad, and one guitarist had to apply for a new visa after losing his passport in a taxi.

His assistant, Freya, brought a different viewpoint to every argument. She cared less about spreadsheets and more about what the audience would remember afterwards. Her vision was of lanterns hanging above the quarry floor, projections on the rock, and a choir singing at sunset. Marek thought it sounded expensive. Freya reminded him that the value of a festival is not measured only in ticket sales, and that the strongest visual impression would cost less than a second stage.

In the end they built the lanterns. On the opening night the rain stopped an hour before the gates opened, and the light on the wet stone was extraordinary. People climbed the cliff road on foot, laughing, carrying blankets and cheap umbrellas. Marek stood at the back with a clipboard he never once looked at. Freya found him there near midnight and said nothing; she simply pointed at the crowd. He nodded, and for the first time in six months he allowed himself to enjoy the noise.

Woordenlijst

Word	Meaning
ultimate	
ultimately	
unacceptable	
unconscious	
undergo	
undertake	
unexpected	
unfold	
unfortunate	
unique	

universe
unknown
urgent
usage
useless
value
variation
vary
vast
venue
vertical
very
via
viewpoint
visa
visible
vision
visual

Try our 6-step method for free and make these words stick.

Listen to this episode online: https://course.interactivelessons.nl/local/podcast/episode.php?id=26645

Start this course for free: https://course.interactivelessons.nl/mod/quiz/view.php?id=1801