

Comment from Frank

A few years ago, I was part of an unusual experience. J, an Englishman living here in our village in France, worked as a teacher at a school in Germany. He commuted every day, in his car with French number plates and, I think, a British driving license. One day, he dropped by our house to say that he had "a bit of a problem." He had been caught speeding whilst driving in Germany and would have to surrender his license for four weeks. But he lives in France and the driving offence was committed in Germany, and what should one do in this situation?

I phoned the relevant authorities and explained the situation. Of course, for them, it was nothing new. J would have to send in a copy of his driving license and promise not to drive in Germany for the duration. If he did, and he got caught, it would make things worse for him. He was free to drive anywhere else in Europe. Fortunately, all this happened during the summer holidays, so his driving life was not impacted at all.

Perfectly normal when living in a border area.

Question: In the story, when J mentioned he had "a bit of a problem," how did this phrase reflect the situation he was in, and what does this expression generally imply in English?

- A) It implies a significant issue; J was exaggerating the severity of his situation, suggesting that losing his driving license was a major disruption, even though it was during his holidays.
- B) It suggests a minor or manageable issue; J was downplaying the seriousness of his situation, indicating that the problem with his driving license was not as disruptive as it could have been, especially since it was during the summer holidays.
- C) It indicates a humorous situation; J was using the phrase to add a light-hearted spin to the problem of losing his driving license, implying that it was an amusing inconvenience rather than a serious issue.

1. Experience: Which of the following best interprets the significance of the "unusual experience" mentioned in the context?

- A) A common occurrence that happens regularly in border areas.
- B) A rare situation involving international laws and personal circumstances.
- C) An everyday experience for people living in multi-national regions.

2. Village: In the context described, how does the "village" setting influence the narrative?

- A) It highlights the complexity of international living in rural settings.
- B) It signifies the simplicity and slow pace of rural life unaffected by international dilemmas.
- C) It underscores the interconnectedness of European countries, even in secluded areas.

3. Teacher: Considering the role of the "teacher," what can be inferred about his lifestyle?

- A) He leads a simple life, focusing solely on his teaching responsibilities.
- B) His profession requires balancing international regulations and personal commitments.
- C) He is likely unaccustomed to the legal frameworks of the countries he interacts with.

4. School: What does the involvement of a "school in Germany" imply about the individual's daily routine?

- A) It suggests a routine centered around educational environments and learning.
- B) It indicates a daily cross-border commute that is integral to his professional life.
- C) It reflects a preference for working in culturally diverse settings.

5. Car: How does the "car with French number plates" contribute to the narrative?

- A) It emphasizes the ease of international travel within the EU.
- B) It symbolizes the blending of personal identity and multinational living.
- C) It represents a mere mode of transportation without broader implications.

6. License: The "surrender of the license" primarily signifies what in the context of the story?

- A) A temporary hindrance in the person's professional and personal mobility.
- B) A mere administrative procedure without significant personal impact.
- C) A critical reflection on the importance of adhering to local laws.

7. House: What does the mention of the "house" suggest about the individual's personal life?

- A) It indicates a stable home base amidst his transnational lifestyle.
- B) It is just a background detail without much relevance to the story.
- C) It represents a sanctuary from the complexities of his daily commute.

8. Problem: In the narrative, the "problem" of being caught speeding is best interpreted as:

- A) A minor inconvenience easily resolved with a simple administrative action.
- B) A significant issue that could have had severe repercussions if not addressed.
- C) An everyday challenge that people in his situation commonly face.

9. Authorities: The interaction with the "authorities" is indicative of:

- A) The routine nature of such incidents for people living in border regions.
- B) A unique and unprecedented legal dilemma requiring special attention.
- C) The complexity of navigating international laws in everyday life.

10. Holidays: How do the "holidays" contribute to the resolution of the situation?

- A) They provide a timely break, preventing any disruption to his professional responsibilities.

B) They are irrelevant to the legal situation but offer a personal respite.

C) They highlight the seasonal nature of his work and its impact on personal life.