

Future of German-English friendship

by Antonia Blaich

2103 - Brussels, Capital of the United States of Europe

Jasmine opened the door and entered the room: "Did you know our great-grandparents lived in different countries?" Delilah turned to her flatmate: "First: Why do you have to ask that right now, at eleven o'clock p.m.? And second: You mean like we do? Different states with one government?" Jasmine dropped herself on her bed: "Nope, I mean like the USA and the USE! Two different nation, two governments, different languages, laws and culture!" With that, the brunet girl opened her bag and showed Delilah a folder with a pink sticker on it. There were some papers inside. "And look", she exclaimed, "I've found some of my great-grandmother's stuff. In 2021, she attended to something called "Erasmus-Program" and came to Oxford for a semester abroad." Delilah placed the tablet with her fantasy novel on the desk and sat down next to her mate. She took the folder and read through it: "Fancy!"

2021 – University of Oxford

"Hey, I'm Sarah, is this room 20B?" John turned around, his feet landing on the floor, and pushed his headphones from his ears: "Yes, come in. I'm John. You're the Erasmus-student, aren't you?" He scanned the girl, her rainbow-dyed hair, torn black jeans and sneakers. She was carrying a huge backpack. She smiled widely, showing white teeth: "Yeah, I'm from Hanover in Germany and came here for a semester abroad. I'm studying psychology." John nodded and smiled as well: "Okay, sounds fascinating. I'm studying law. I thought about doing an Erasmus, but the Brexit makes it really hard. How was it for you?" Sarah chuckled and placed her backpack on one of the beds: "Annoying. That hole paper stuff really sucked but I've always wanted to come to Great Britain... and here I am!" John couldn't help but laugh as well: "Truly love your optimism!"

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"Seriously, they had to fill in tons of papers just for studying in a different European country?!" Delilah was still confused and kind of upset. Jasmine kissed her girlfriend on the cheek: "Don't forget, the Brexit closed the border between Germany and Great Britain. It was like today travelling to the USA." Delilah shook her head: "I wouldn't say they were stupid because that would be rude, but they were!" Jasmine laughed; she really loved her flatmate's silly jokes. And now her flatmate grabbed a small piece of paper from the desk: "But I have something even older: Do you see this? This is a letter, my great-great-great-grandfather Elliot wrote home to his wife, when he came to Germany as a soldier in WWII. That was in... 1945." Jasmine looked at the torn and brown paper: "Really, why does this paper even exist?! Shouldn't it be, I don't know, fallen to dust?!" Delilah shrugged: "Seems like my ancestors kept it very well and looked after it."

1945 – Cologne, Western Germany

"Move to the right, all of you, move to the right!", Elliot shouted while trying to get the people, mostly women and children, to form a queue. English soldiers, his comrades, started to give little amounts of bread to the hungry Germans. "You!", he turned to a young man, "do you speak English?" "Ehm, yes, a little." The man had a heavy German accent. "Okay", Elliot demanded, "Translate!" "O...okay. Ähm, geht bitte alle nach rechts!" The man's voice was a little unsteady and

not very strong, but the people followed his commands. And that was enough. Elliot gave some more instructions which his translator translated and slowly the whole situation became more organized. Elliot nodded satisfied: "Thank you. I might ask again later, but now go and get something to eat. What's your name?" "I'm Paul, and I will."

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Delilah smiled: "Seems like Germany and England have a long and changeful relationship." Jasmine nodded and changed her position so that her head was resting in her girlfriends lap: "Yep. And I vote for not ending it soon, it's way too good!" "Love you for that!", Delilah smiled. Jasmine kissed her girlfriend: "Love you too."