

UNIT 10 — HOUSEKEEPING

Reading: Housekeeping Dialogue

In the staff room of the Elliot Hotel, two house-keepers are discussing their day so far:

Mary: At last a break, I feel like I have been on my feet for days!

Sarah: Yes, it has been a tough shift today. Twenty six departures and 14 stays. I don't know how we are going to finish everything on time.

Mary: I know. I am only half-way through, that last room I cleaned was filthy. I am always amazed that people can leave the room in that kind of state. I would be embarrassed to do that.

Sarah: How bad was it?

Mary: Well, I won't tell you what I found in the sink, but I had to sanitize it twice! And oh, the smell. I used almost a whole can of deodorizer before it was gone.

Sarah: Yuck. I have been quite lucky today. Most of my rooms were not so bad, but one of them had a horrible chocolate stain on the bedding. At least I hope it was chocolate.

Mary: How many rooms do you have left?

Sarah: Just 6 stays, but I said I would work late and deep-clean the two empty rooms.

Mary: Ah, ok. I suppose at least with the stays you don't need to worry too much about scrubbing the bathroom, just a little dusting and polishing.

Sarah: Yes, but you know that Miss Simms is on duty today so we have to make sure that the rooms are perfect, and every single item on our check-list is done. You know what she says "cleanliness is next to godliness".

Mary: She shouted at me the other day for not replenishing my cart at the end of my shift. I told her that I would do it in the morning, but that wasn't good enough for her. I think she has forgotten what it is actually like to do the job and not just supervise.

Sarah: I know. The worst thing is she has decided to run another training session on using hazardous chemicals, and it's on my day off so I have to come in. I mean, nothing has changed since the last training so what is the point?

Mary: I have absolutely no idea, the last training was only a month ago and we haven't got any new staff, maybe she just wants to feel important.

Sarah: That could be it. Did you hear about what happened to Jane yesterday?

Mary: No what?

Sarah: Well she was doing some guest laundry and there was a red sock left in the washing machine, well, the whole wash came out pink. Miss Simms was so angry that she gave Jane every single turndown shift for the next two weeks so now she has to come in twice a day.

Mary: I think that's a bit unfair, accidents happen.

Sarah: Yes, but I heard that Jane didn't report a few technical problems with the rooms last week, so Miss Simms was already angry at her.

Mary: I see. Do you know when the new room supplies will be coming in?

Sarah: The day after tomorrow I think. I know that I have the ballroom scheduled for a full cleaning then and we need the delivery before I can do that, we are out of disposable gloves.

Mary: Great. Anyway, I suppose I better be getting back soon. Is John working today? I need a strong man to help me with the bags of linens.

Sarah: Yeah, he should be in the bar area now, or if not in the basement. If I see him, I will tell him that you want him.

Mary: Thanks.

Sarah: See you around Mary.

Discussion Questions

Do you think working in housekeeping is a hard job? Why?

What advice would you give Miss Simms in regards to her management behavior?