

19 Sold Out

'The play may begin at any moment,' I said.

'It may have begun already,' Susan answered.

5 I hurried to the ticket-office. 'May I have two tickets please?' I asked.

'I'm sorry, we've sold out,' the girl said.

'What a pity!' Susan exclaimed.

10 Just then, a man hurried to the ticket-office.

'Can I return these two tickets?' he asked.

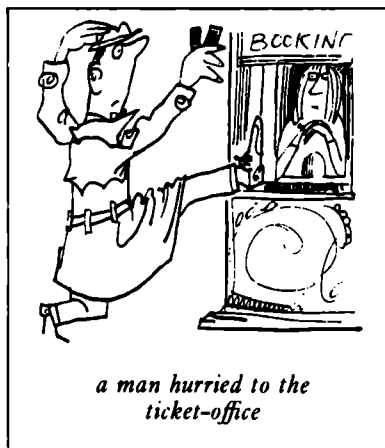
'Certainly,' the girl said.

15 I went back to the ticket-office at once.

'Could I have those two tickets please?' I asked.

'Certainly,' the girl said, 'but they are for next Wednesday's performance. Do you still want them?'

'I might as well have them,' I said sadly.



Comprehension Précis and Composition

Answer these questions *in not more than 45 words*.

1. When was the play going to begin?
2. How many tickets did you ask for?
3. Were there any left or not?
4. Were Susan and you disappointed or not?
5. Who hurried to the ticket-office just then?
6. How many tickets did he return?
7. Were they for that day's performance, or were they for next Wednesday's performance?
8. Did you buy them or not?

Key Structures

Can and May

Study these uses of *can* and *may*:

a Instead of saying :

Will you let me use your telephone please?

We can say :

Can I use your telephone please?

Or: Could I use your telephone please?

Or: May I use your telephone please?

Or: Might I use your telephone please?

b Instead of saying :

Perhaps he will come tomorrow.

We can say :

He may come tomorrow.

Or: He might come tomorrow.

Perhaps he telephoned last night, but I'm not sure.

He may have telephoned last night, but I'm not sure.

Or: He might have telephoned last night, but I'm not sure.

c Now study these expressions:

Do you want to come to the cinema with me?

I haven't got anything to do, so I *may as well* (or: I *might as well*) come with you.

Do you think he'll pass that exam?

He'll never pass. He *might as well* give up.

Exercises

A. Read the passage again. Put a line under the verbs *can*, *could*, *may* and *might*.

B. Use phrases with *can*, *could*, *may* or *might* in place of the words in italics. Do not refer to the passage until you finish the exercise.

'*Perhaps the play will begin* at any moment,' I said.

'*Perhaps it has begun already*,' Susan answered.

I hurried to the ticket-office. '*Will you let me have* two tickets, please?' I asked.

'I'm sorry, we've sold out,' the girl said.

Just then, a man hurried to the ticket-office.

'*Will you let me return* these two tickets?' he asked.

I went back to the ticket-office at once. '*Will you let me have* those two tickets please?' I asked.

'Certainly,' the girl said, 'but they are for next Wednesday's performance. Do you still want them?'

'*Not really, but I'll have them*,' I said sadly.

Special Difficulties

Instead of saying:

I am sorry.

We have sold out.

We can say:

I'm sorry. (l. 7)

We've sold out. (l. 7)

Exercise

Change the form of the verbs in italics:

1. I *haven't* seen him for three years.
2. There *are not* many people here.
3. He *doesn't* understand what *you're* saying.
4. She *did not* tell me she *had not* seen you.
5. I *shall not* stay a moment longer.
6. He *will not* do as *he is* told.
7. *When'll* I see you?
8. *What've* you done? *You've* broken that bottle!
9. *He's* in the living room. *He's* just come home.
10. I *cannot* understand why he *hasn't* arrived.
11. You *mustn't* believe him.
12. I *wasn't* expecting you. You *weren't* supposed to arrive until 6 o'clock.
13. That *man's* been in prison.
14. They *hadn't* seen the film before.