

Tekst 6

De volgende tekst is het begin van een column van Bill Bryson uit Notes from A Big Country (1999).

HOW TO HAVE FUN AT HOME



My wife thinks nearly everything about American life is wonderful. She loves having her groceries bagged for her. She adores free iced water and book-matches. She thinks home-delivered pizza is a central hallmark of civilization. I haven't the heart to tell her that waitresses in the States urge
5 everyone to have a nice day.

Personally, while I am fond of America and grateful for its many conveniences, I am not quite so slavishly uncritical. Take the matter of having your groceries bagged for you. I appreciate the gesture, but when you come down to it what does it actually achieve except give you an
10 opportunity to stand there and watch your groceries being bagged? It's not as if it buys you some quality time. I don't want to get heavy here, but given the choice between free iced water at restaurants and, let us say, a national health service, I have to say my instinct is to go with the latter.

27 there are certain things that are so wonderful in American life
15 that I can hardly stand it myself. Chief among these, without any doubt, is the garbage disposal¹⁾. A garbage disposal is everything a labour-saving device should be and so seldom is – noisy, fun, extremely hazardous, and so dazzlingly good at what it does that you cannot imagine how you ever managed without one. If you had asked me eighteen months ago what the
20 prospects were that shortly my chief hobby would be placing assorted objects down a hole in the kitchen sink, I believe I would have laughed in your face, but in fact it is so.

I have never had a garbage disposal before, so I have been learning its tolerances through a process of trial and error. Chopsticks give perhaps
25 the liveliest response (this is not recommended, of course, but there comes a time with every piece of machinery when you just have to see what it can do), but cantaloupe rinds make the richest, throatiest sound and result in less 'down time'. Coffee grounds in quantity are the most likely to provide a satisfying 'Vesuvius effect', though for obvious reasons

30 it is best not to attempt this difficult feat until your wife has gone out for the day, and to have a mop and stepladder standing by.

The most exciting event with a garbage disposal, of course, is when it jams and you have to reach in and unclog it, knowing that at any moment it might spring to life and abruptly convert your arm from a useful
35 grasping tool into a dibber. Don't try to tell me about living life on the edge.

[...]

I could go on and on cataloguing other small, unsung glories of American household life – refrigerators that dispense iced water and make
40 their own icecubes, walk-in closets, electrical sockets in bathrooms – but I won't. I'm out of space and anyway Mrs B has just gone out to do some shopping and it has occurred to me that I have not yet seen what the disposal can do with a juice carton. I'll get back to you on this one.

noot 1 garbage disposal = apparaat dat afval vermaalt en dat vaak is ingebouwd in gootstenen in Amerikaanse keukens

Tekst 6 De volgende tekst...

- “I haven’t the heart to tell her that waitresses in the States urge everyone to have a nice day.” (regels 4-5)
- 1p 25 Welke van de volgende woorden heeft de meeste nadruk, gezien het betoog van de schrijver?
- A heart
 - B waitresses
 - C urge
 - D everyone
 - E nice
- 1p 26 Which of the following can be concluded from lines 6-13?
- A Americans will only invest in customer relations if they think it is profitable for them.
 - B Employees in American restaurants and supermarkets are friendly and very efficient.
 - C In order to enjoy the high standard of living in America you have to work long and hard hours.
 - D The examples in favour of living in America only deal with insignificant aspects of life.
- 1p 27 Which of the following fits the gap in line 14?
- A Consequently,
 - B However,
 - C Likewise,
 - D Moreover,
- “noisy, fun, extremely hazardous, and so dazzlingly good” (regels 17-18)
- 1p 28 Welke later in de tekst beschreven actie past bij de kwalificatie ‘extremely hazardous’?
- “it is best not to attempt this difficult feat until your wife has gone out for the day” (regels 30-31)
- 1p 29 Welk bezwaar zou de vrouw van de schrijver hebben tegen zijn experiment?
- “I’ll get back to you on this one.” (final sentence)
- 1p 30 What does the writer make clear with this remark?
- A He hopes to improve on the design of his garbage disposal.
 - B He intends to check if his readers have understood his column.
 - C He might write about yet another garbage disposal experiment.
 - D He wants to make sure his wife has in fact left the house.