



ESL Podcast 742 – Admiring Someone from Afar

GLOSSARY

what I wouldn't give... – a phrase used to mean that one wants something very much, being willing to give a lot to have it

* What I wouldn't give to have a few extra days of vacation from work!

date – a social meeting between two people who may be romantically interested in each other

* Danielle went on a date with her coworker Evan, but they didn't have very much to talk about.

number – phone number; the set of numbers one uses to make a phone call to reach another person

* I didn't know you were interested in surfing, too. Give me your number and I'll call you the next time I go surfing.

out of (one's) league – for something or someone to be so good or of such high quality that one feels they or it is beyond one's level

* We need to hire entertainment for our community show, but most of the names on this list are out of our league. We don't have the money to hire them!

to have nothing on (one) – to be as good as one; to have no advantages over one

* Dora has nothing on Maureen, who is just as good a mother as Dora believes herself to be.

confidence – feeling that one is able to do something because one has the ability or the right qualities to achieve it; self-assurance

* Junko has confidence in her own ability to start a successful business.

to throw (something) away – to dispose of something in the trash; to waste an opportunity

* All of the food in this refrigerator has gone bad. Throw it all away!

out of the blue – without warning; for something to happen without an indication beforehand that it would be happening

* Christophe received an email message out of the blue from his old elementary school friend.

creep – jerk; a person who behaves in a bad or undesirable way

* Ophelia's brother is a creep, always making fun of Ophelia and her friends and making their lives miserable.



ESL Podcast 742 – Admiring Someone from Afar

bold – confident and courageous; showing an ability to take risks; not shy or meek

* In a bold move, McQ Corp. announced that it would open 100 new stores next year.

to steal – to take something one doesn't own; to take another person's property

* Watch those kids to make sure they don't steal any candy!

to admire (someone) from afar – to respect and like someone romantically without approaching or getting to know him or her, observing him or her from a distance

* Wei has always admired Jason from afar, but has never tried to talk to him.

to come off as – to leave the impression that; to make others see you in a certain way, often without intending to

* Bruno comes off as a tough guy, but he's really kind and soft-hearted when you get to know him.

mysterious – something or someone that is difficult to understand, identify, or to know

* Benoit received a mysterious box in the mail.

to eat it up – to eagerly accept something, often because it is what one wants to have or to believe

* Parents love to see their children singing and dancing. No matter how poorly they perform, the parents will eat it up.

no guts, no glory – a phrase meaning that if one does not take risks, one will not gain anything

* Carl decided to invest money in the new plan even though it's risky, because he believes in no guts, no glory.



ESL Podcast 742 – Admiring Someone from Afar

COMPREHENSION QUESTIONS

1. What does Lynn want Perry to do?
 - a) Stop feeling so sad.
 - b) Ask the man why he threw away the girl's number.
 - c) Call the girl and ask her for a date.

2. Which of these would be "out of the blue"?
 - a) Doing something the same way each week.
 - b) Doing something complete unexpected.
 - c) Doing something without help from others.

WHAT ELSE DOES IT MEAN?

to have nothing on (someone)

The phrasal verb, "to have nothing on (someone)" in this podcast, means to be as good as someone or to have no advantages over someone: "The new player on the team may be younger, but he has nothing on the old players." "To have nothing on (someone)" also means to have no information that could be damaging to someone: "We have nothing on the new political candidate that we can use to damage his image." The opposite to this is "to have something on (someone)," which means to have information that can be damaging or hurtful to someone: "The reason James gets the best assignments and a raise each year is that he has something on the boss."

to eat it up

In this podcast, "to eat it up" means to eagerly accept something, often because it is what one wants to have or to believe: "This new cell phone is designed for people who text a lot and I have no doubt teenagers will eat it up." "To eat it up" can also mean to eat everything that is available or that is offered: "I made this fried chicken especially for you, so eat it up!" "To eat (something) up" means to use a lot of resources or time: "This computer program eats up too much memory." Or, "Janice likes to play sports in her free time, but playing every weekend would eat up too much of her time, time she prefers to spend with her family."



ESL Podcast 742 – Admiring Someone from Afar

CULTURE NOTE

Toll-Free Phone Numbers in the U.S.

Many business want new customers to be able to call them to place orders or to ask questions without having to pay for the “long distance” (not local) call. For that reason, these businesses have “toll-free” (costing nothing) phone numbers available to the “general public” (everyone). The company is charged for the long distance call instead of the caller.

Toll-free calling began in 1967 in the United States. Before that time, callers who wanted the person being called to be “billed” (charged) had to place a “collect call” with the help of an “operator” (person who works for the phone company and whose job is to help people make telephone calls). The first companies to use toll-free calling in the U.S. were those in the travel “industry” (business), including large hotel “chains” (companies with stores or businesses in many locations) and rental car companies.

For many years, people could “identify” (find; recognize) a toll-free phone number simply by noticing that it began with “1-800.” In fact, “one-eight hundred” became “synonymous with” (the same as; identified directly with) the term “toll-free,” so that people could simply say, “Call our 1-800 number to get free information,” instead of, “Call us toll-free to get free information.” Beginning in 1996, however, phone companies started to “run out of” (not have enough of) phone numbers beginning with 1-800 and added the “prefix” (word, letters, or numbers place before others) 1-888. As time passed, other toll-free prefixes were added, with 1-877 added in 1998, 1-866 added in 2000, and 1-855 in 2010. However, today, people still say “one-eight hundred” to refer to all toll-free phone numbers.

Comprehension Questions Correct Answers: 1 – c; 2 – b



ESL Podcast 742 – Admiring Someone from Afar

COMPLETE TRANSCRIPT

Welcome to English as a Second Language Podcast number 742: Admiring Someone from Afar.

This is English as a Second Language Podcast episode 742. I'm your host, Dr. Jeff McQuillan, coming to you from the Center for Educational Development in beautiful Los Angeles, California.

Our website is eslpod.com. Go there to download a Learning Guide for this episode.

This episode is called "Admiring Someone from Afar." When you see someone that you like at a distance, that's what we're talking about here. It's going to be about love, of course. Let's get started.

[start of dialogue]

Perry: Look at her! What I wouldn't give to get a date with her.

Lynn: You should go talk to her and ask her for her number.

Perry: No way! She's completely out of my league. See that guy she's talking to? He's the kind of guy who'll get her number.

Lynn: That guy has nothing on you. The only thing that guy has that you don't is confidence.

Perry: See? She's giving him her number. I don't have a chance.

Lynn: But look what he's doing with it. He's throwing it away. What a jerk! Wait here.

Perry: Hey, where are you going?

Lynn: I've got it. Here it is. Here's her number. Call her.

Perry: Call her?! Out of the blue? You're crazy. She'll think I'm some kind of creep.

Lynn: No, she'll think you're being bold. She'll love that.



ESL Podcast 742 – Admiring Someone from Afar

Perry: What am I supposed to say to her? “Hi, I stole your phone number and I’d like a date.”

Lynn: No, tell her the truth. Tell her you saw her, admired her from afar, and wanted to ask her out.

Perry: What if she asks me how I got her number?

Lynn: Tell her you’ll tell her that when you see her on your first date. You’ll come off as mysterious. She’ll eat it up.

Perry: I can’t do it. There’s no way I could do that, could I?

Lynn: Yes you can. After all, no guts, no glory!

[end of dialogue]

Perry begins our dialogue by saying to Lynn, “Look at her! What I wouldn’t give to get a date with her.” The expression “what I wouldn’t give” means that you want something very much; you’re willing to do a lot in order to get it. Perry sees this woman, obviously a beautiful woman, and wants to have a date with her. A “date” is a meeting between two people who may be romantically interested in each other, although we use the word “date” sometimes for other meanings as well. “Date” can mean the day on the calendar, the month and day and year of something. It can also be used sometimes for a non-romantic meeting, but here it’s definitely a meeting that Perry would like to be romantic.

Lynn says, “You should go talk to her and ask her for her number.” Her “number” is, of course, her telephone number. Now this is the obvious thing that a woman might say to a man. But a man – most men, anyway, are somewhat afraid of going up and talking to a strange woman, so Perry replies, “No way (meaning absolutely not)! She’s completely out of my league (league).” The expression “to be out of your league” means that someone or something is too good or of such high quality that you don’t feel you are worthy. When you say a woman is out of your league, you would mean she’s so beautiful, she’s so attractive that she would not be interested in someone as ugly as you – well, as ugly as me! Well this, of course, is an excuse for Perry not to go talk to her. He says, “See that guy she’s talking to?” Apparently, this beautiful woman is talking to another man. “He’s the kind of guy who’ll get her number.” He’s the sort of person – the sort of man who will be able to get her to give him her number.



ESL Podcast 742 – Admiring Someone from Afar

Lynn says, “That guy has nothing on you.” The expression “to have nothing on (someone)” means that you are as good as that person; that person has no advantages over you. Lynn says, “The only thing that guy has that you don’t is confidence.” “Confidence” is the feeling that you are able to do something because you have the ability. Speaking in English as a foreign language or a second language requires confidence. If you have confidence, usually you’ll speak better.

Well, poor Perry doesn’t have confidence in himself. Perry says, “See? She’s giving him her number. I don’t have a chance.” I don’t have any way I can be successful. Lynn says, “But look what he’s doing with it. He’s throwing it away.” “To throw (something) away” means to put it in the trash; to dispose of it, we might say. It can also be used to mean to waste an opportunity. But here it means, I think, that he’s taking the piece of paper and he’s putting it in a trashcan. Lynn says, “What a jerk! Wait here.” “What a jerk” is Lynn describing this other man, and so she tells Perry to wait where he is. Perry says, “Hey, where are you going?” Lynn says, “I’ve got it. Here it is. Here’s her number. Call her.” So Lynn goes over and picks up the telephone number that the other man threw away and tells Perry to call her. Well, this is rather strange. Perry says, “Call her?! Out of the blue?” The expression “out of the blue,” like the color blue (blue), means unexpectedly, without warning, for something to happen without any indication that it was going to happen. This woman, of course, doesn’t even know Perry, may not have even seen him, so if he calls her it would be completely unexpected; it would be out of the blue. Perry says, “You’re crazy.” I think Perry’s right; Lynn is a little crazy here. I mean, he doesn’t even know this woman, the woman doesn’t even know who he is. Perry says, “She’ll think I’m some kind of creep.” A “creep” (creep) is the same as a jerk. It’s a negative way of describing someone who behaves in a bad or very unlikable way.

Lynn says, “No, she’ll think you’re being bold.” “To be bold” (bold) means to be confident, to have courage, to show an ability to take risks, not to be fearful. Lynn says, “She’ll love that.” Perry says, “What am I supposed to say to her? ‘Hi, I stole your phone number and I’d like a date.’” “Stole” (stole) is the past tense of “steal” (steal), which means to rob someone, to take something that isn’t yours. Perry says that he can’t really call up this woman and say that he stole her telephone number. Lynn says, “No, tell her the truth. Tell her that you saw her, admired her from afar, and wanted to ask her out.” “To admire (someone)” means to like them very much, to respect them very much. It doesn’t have a romantic meaning in all cases: you can admire a president, you can admire a famous person, you could admire your parents, people that you respect. We sometimes use the phrase “to look up to.” “I look up to my father.” I think he’s a



ESL Podcast 742 – Admiring Someone from Afar

great man; I admire him. It can also be used in the sense of thinking that someone is beautiful; that's how Lynn is using it here. She says he should tell this woman that he admired her from afar (afar). "Afar" means at a distance, from a distance, far away. Lynn says he should ask her out. "To ask (someone) out" means to ask them to go on a date with you, a romantic date.

Perry says, "What if she asks me how I got her number?" Lynn responds, "Tell her you'll tell her when you see her on your first date. You'll come off as mysterious. She'll eat it up." "To come off as" means to make other people believe a certain thing, to see you in a certain way, to leave a certain impression on someone. "He came off as an intelligent person," that is the impression that I got from him, that is my idea of him from that situation or that encounter. "He came off as a jerk," that would be a very negative way of describing your impression of someone, or "a creep." Well, Lynn thinks that Perry will come off as "mysterious," something or someone that is difficult to understand or identify. She says this woman will eat it up. "To eat it up" means to accept something eagerly, usually because you want to believe it. It's something that you believe perhaps already and so when someone tells you, you accept it very quickly.

Perry says, "I can't do it. There's no way I could do that, could I?" Lynn says, "Yes you can. After all, no guts, no glory!" This is an old expression, "no guts (guts), no glory (glory)." "Guts" is courage, strength, bravery. "Glory" is something wonderful that happens, something that you want to happen that will give you great pleasure or perhaps great fame. So the expression "no guts, no glory" means that if you don't take any risks, if you're not brave and courageous, then you won't gain anything; you won't be able to get something that you want. There's another expression, "no pain, no gain," meaning in order to get something good you often have to go through some pain. And certainly, asking a woman out on a date, for a man, can be pretty painful!

Now let's listen to the dialogue, this time at a normal speed.

[start of dialogue]

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ESL Podcast 742 – Admiring Someone from Afar

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Perry: I can't do it. There's no way I could do that, could I?

Lynn: Yes you can. After all, no guts, no glory!

[end of dialogue]

Well, she comes off as mysterious; she's admired from afar; that's because no one knows what she looks like. It's our own scriptwriter, Dr. Lucy Tse. Thanks, Lucy!

From Los Angeles, California, I'm Jeff McQuillan. Thank you for listening. Come back and listen to us again here on ESL Podcast.



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