

Liam looks like he's really not sure what's going on. He looks at the three cups and points to the one on his right. Wesley lifts it up to reveal the ping pong ball. Mike and Jessica make notes.

WESLEY

I guess you got lucky.

LIAM

I guess so, but I also guess that isn't really important, as the point of that exercise was more about assessing my decision making process? Or seeing how accustomed I am to making choices under pressure? Or some other reason I haven't yet fathomed?

JESSICA

There is no other reason that you have not yet fathomed, Liam, you were simply supposed to guess which ball the cup was under. Sometimes candidates can read too much into the questions, so please try not to read too much into this next one, which I will be asking.

She pauses and reaches for her water.

JESSICA (CONT'D)

So...

(takes a healthy swig of water)

...can you tell us about a time...

(takes another large swig)

...when someone made an assumption about you that turned out to be incorrect?

Liam inhales hard as he thinks about it.

LIAM

That's a different type of question in a long line of different types of questions...might have to think about that one...a time someone made an incorrect assumption about me...does it have to be in the office? Can it be outside of the working environment?

JESSICA

We would not be interested in what happens to you outside of the working environment.

LIAM

Okay, then something in the office...where someone has assumed something about me that turned out to not be true...hmmm...

MIKE

What would someone who has worked with or in reasonably close proximity to you have falsely assumed?

LIAM

Maybe that I wasn't quite as hard a worker as I am?

MIKE

Mmmm, that's not really what we're looking for.

JESSICA

Something more personal, not even work related.

WESLEY

What about your sexuality, for example? That's quite personal.

LIAM

(surprised)

Yes, it's extremely personal!
(thinks for a few
seconds)

Well in that respect I suppose there was Geoff...

He stops speaking as JASMINA enters from stage right. She is dressed in a black niqab covering her entire body and wears sunglasses over her exposed eyes. The panel remain silent and pay her no attention as they wait for Liam to speak as Jasmina crosses the stage and takes the empty chair next to Jessica. Liam automatically reaches out his hand to Jasmina, but thinks better of it and turns the gesture into an elbow scratch. Wesley makes a note.

LIAM (CONT'D)

...Sorry, I suppose we're not doing introductions until I've answered this question?

Jessica solemnly nods.

LIAM (CONT'D)

Uh, what was I going to say for this one?

WESLEY

Something about someone called Geoff and some assumption he made about you.

LIAM

Yeah, well, this is a bit of a bad example, but Geoff was someone who worked in one of the other teams in our room and he made the assumption that I was gay.

JESSICA

And why would he make such an assumption, Liam?

LIAM

I don't know really. Probably because I had no visible lady in my life and, for a guy of my age, that could be perceived as unusual by those of a slightly narrow mind. Maybe Geoff was just lashing out - he too had no lady in his life, so maybe he was trying to direct attention towards me to cover his own tracks.

WESLEY

Why didn't you have a lady in your life?

LIAM

Well that's the ironic thing - I did. But I just didn't want to make it a big deal, for various reasons.

WESLEY

Can you tell us more about her and the reasons you kept it quiet?

LIAM

I'd rather not go into all that, if you don't mind. But Geoff put it about after a few ales in the pub that I might be gay and the rumour stuck with some people until I announced I was in a relationship.

MIKE

Was it a problem that some people thought you might be homosexual?

LIAM

Not at all. Everyone can be what they want to be.

(glances at Jasmina)

(MORE)

LIAM (CONT'D)

Equality is a very, very good thing.

JESSICA

You mean diversity?

LIAM

I probably do.

JESSICA

But you are definitely not gay?

LIAM

No.

JESSICA

Fine.

(gestures to her left)

This is our fourth panel member and her name is Jasmina.

Liam reaches over to shake her hand, which she returns somewhat reluctantly.

LIAM

Hi, Liam Baines.

Jasmina nods.