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**PAID TO WAIT** by Yves Schaëffner

Name: Victoria Hamilton  
Age: 30  
Occupation: Personal Assistant

Q: What exactly do you do for buy:time?

R: It's very diverse. We're like modern-day maitre d's. We do absolutely anything and everything for our clients. We're a bit like personal assistants; we serve our clients to relieve them of their stress and daily inconveniences.

Q: In concrete terms, what do you do for them?

R: I can help them move house or buy a new one, do their taxes, organise their holidays or anything else. For example, one of my clients wanted tickets for a much sought-after exhibition on the Territorial Army, held at the British Museum. So I arrived at 6 am and queued until 10.30 am. That way, he was able to take his girlfriend to the exhibition for Valentine's Day. We do lots of that kind of thing.

Q: You have to queue up often?

R: Yes, I spend a lot of time waiting, be it on the telephone, at the post office, to get tickets or visas. It can take ages when you go into embassies.

Q: What is the biggest queue you've ever had to wait in?

R: Without a doubt, it was for the Manolo Blahnik sale. I had to arrive at 3.30 am. I queued in the cold until the client arrived at 9 am. I gave her my place and she walked right into the shop.

Q: Don't you get the impression that you're wasting your time?

R: No, you can accomplish other tasks at the same time as you wait in line. That's why I carry my Blackberry 24/7.

Q: And you never get impatient?

R: No, but you become very demanding and you quickly learn how to deal with waiting in line. You learn how to minimise the time it takes to wait by making friends with people.

Q: Who are your clients?

R: They are about 60% male and 40% female. The majority are professional men in their early thirties. It's not necessarily rich people, but those that don't have a lot of time on their hands.

Q: Do you get strange requests?

R: Yes. I have quite a demanding client that can call me at two o'clock in the morning because she can't access her Facebook profile. We've also been asked to find a very rare breed of dog, of which only sixty exist. There are some very strange and wonderful requests; that's what makes this job so interesting. There are always challenges and that's what I adore.

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