

Why David Doesn't Want to Work?



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Contents

Acknowledgements

Foreword

Introduction

ACT 1

ACT 2

ACT 3

ACT 4

ACT 5

ACT 6

ACT 7

ACT 8

ACT 9

ACT 10

ACT 11

ACT 12

ACT 13

ACT 14

ACT 15

ACT 16

ACT 17

ACT 18

ACT 19

ACT 20

ACT 21

ACT 22

ACT 23

ACT 24

ACT 25

ACT 26

ACT 27

ACT 28

ACT 29

ACT 30

ACT 31

ACT 32

ACT 33

ACT 34

ACT 35

ACT 36

ACT 37

ACT 38

ACT 39

ACT 40

ACT 41

ACT 42

ACT 43

ACT 44

ACT 45

ACT 1

David who is just 22 years old takes his mother to a new house. He is fair and 5'11" tall boy with a slim body frame. He wears Western outfit like shorts and T-shirts at home. His mother is Mary Gonzales a widow nearing 60 years. This is their first rented house in a decent locality in the suburbs of Panjim, which they take on the lease after the demise of David's father where they are leading a comfortable life in the suburbs.

In the living room, a TV is kept. The house has an old music system and a piano which was used by his father for entertainment. Just for the sentimental purpose, it is kept.

It is evening 5 pm David's mother enters the living room of the new house from the courtyard. The paintings of the house are peeling off and racks inside the living room contained some 20 odd books. The old refrigerator creates noise that can disturb peaceful sleep.

A pal of gloom prevails. Mary Gonzales shows an expression of helplessness. On and off she glances at the photo of her husband in the living room. Her eyes welled in tears. She wipes off the tears with a towel.

SCENE 1

David Gonzales, her son, enters the room holding a cup of coffee. He is in thinking about something serious. He sits beside the mother. Mother glances at the son. David switches on the TV.

David Gonzales: Don't worry maa, I am with you right.

He consoles her. David looks relaxed. Mary Gonzales goes to the kitchen and brings biscuits for him. David sips his coffee and bites the biscuits.

Mary (ruefully): Beta, now the savings of your father are almost spent. My only hope is you, and you are on the job search.

David: Maa, getting a correct job is a tricky thing. Sometime before, I tried to work in companies. They are offering low salaries. You remember how I went to Kolkata and worked in hotel front office. I could not tolerate their food. I don't know whom to tell. Getting a good job is, first of all, a difficult thing. Continuing in position is even more difficult.

Mary: Then how Nisha who is living two houses afar manages? She got a job in Hongkong Bank of Goa. She has been working for nearly two years.

David: Maa, companies promote women workers. They feel if women are there, they can attract men talent. There are many things maa, which you don't understand.

Mary: Then how Sujit our former neighbour is working in an IT company for more than three years?

David: Maa, he has an engineering degree. I studied up to B. Com only. When dad was alive, he claimed that those who study B. Com could get jobs in banks as a probationary officer. Yes, some may be getting even now also, either through reservations or by merit. But in my case, so far, luck has not favoured.

Mary goes into deep thinking.

* * *

SCENE 2

It was an evening at 5 pm. Mary Gonzales is sitting in the courtyard. She was holding the dresses that are dried in the sun. In sitting posture, she tries to fold the dresses. At the same time, she reflects on the past in her rented house.

She tells herself. 'Had my husband been alive my son would have been happy realising his responsibilities'.

She remembers the days in her old house. The scene goes to the old house in the suburbs of the city, crumbling that forced her to sell it. David was 18 years old at that time doing his graduation. The new home in the town is closer to the city helping her son to find a job here. She reflects about the past where they had all kinds of luxuries of those days when her husband was alive. She remembers the love of her husband.

It was the scene of a grand dinner with relatives, family and friends where dance and DJ were organised. David dances with his father and friends. The party is over. David's father Philip Gonzales talks to his sister's husband Louis Phillip working in a railway company.

Father Gonzales: You people don't know the difficulties of work. You hardly work and take leaves too often. In the eight hours working hour also, you play carrom board during the afternoon for two hours.

Louis Phillip: Why you didn't write the test during your young age? Is it my fault? Don't be jealous. I wrote the exam, and during my graduation, I scored 67% marks. I got selected, and now I enjoy the fruits. You didn't study properly. We government people will be like this. Less work more salary. I am going to get raise as per the 6th pay commission.

Father Gonzales: OK I agree. I often work in night shifts. Getting a pay hike is difficult for me. But I too have a zeal. My son should get a government job. I want him to be a probationary officer in a nationalised bank. He should not lack comforts.

Louis Phillip: Yes, bank jobs are good. See in government jobs, we are the kings. We cannot be removed from posts even if we don't work well. And many people create retirement funds by taking bribes. I know many who have accumulated wealth. They use that wealth to pay dowries to their daughters or buy properties or gold.

Father Gonzales (boasting): Bro, I have enough ancestral property. I have nearly quarter acre of land in the prime part of Goa. My only concern is that my son needs to get a good job and finds the right bride.

Phillip (taking a sip of beer): Yes bro, you have good foresight. But luck also should favour you.

Mary enters in blue saree listening to the conversation. Her face appeared charming although she became fat.

Mary: Yes, luck is also a factor, otherwise fate. I know how many families who were under abject poverty have become wealthy now. See the example of Susan in the next street. She was a maid here. Now, her son has grown up and went to the US. She has stopped coming here to do menial jobs.

Louis exits from the scene. He takes his family and goes back to his house.

It is the scene of conversation of father and mother about their son and his future.

SCENE 3

Two weeks passed after this. Mary is sitting in the living room. She is also praying. In between, she goes into deep thinking. Her face displays an expression of helplessness.

Mary to herself: After finding a job, I should look for an alliance for my son, preferably a working girl.

David enters hearing this in the living room. He was wearing a black T-shirt and blue jeans.

Mary: Beta, you need to be more responsible by now. Our savings are going to be spent soon. You know how the cancer treatment to our father forced us to sell our prime property. After settling the hospital bills, debts

and giving advance to this house, I am getting bankrupt. I have hardly one lakh with me. It is your father's wish that you look after the household and settle down soon after finding a job.

David: Yes maa, yesterday I went for an interview in a multinational bank. They cleared me three rounds, and any time the call will come to join shortly.

Mary (heaving a sigh of relief): Son, my only hope is you.

David leaves the room to attend a phone call.

David: Let me attend the call and come back.

David exits holding the phone and enters with a smile.

David: Maa, let me calm your worries.

Mary: What happened?

David: Be surprised, I got a job. Salary is thirty thousand in American Bank of Goa.

Mary (with expression of awe): The big American bank in the city! Getting that salary is indeed great.

David: Yes mom, my friends are getting twenty thousand, childhood friend Nikita drawing fifteen thousand and Kohli getting twenty-five thousand. You know them all. Look, your son is many inches taller than them. They will be surely jealous if they come to know about my new job in the American Bank.

* * *

ACT 2

It is David's initial phase of his career. He joins a multinational bank that has a huge campus. They offer their employees free food. They pick up and drop their staff. Once an executive enters the office, the executive is under surveillance. David seems to be proud of new job and he knows how his friends fancy about getting a job in a multinational bank like this. David tries to perform well in his new job, and in this process, he meets challenges. Initially, David is a simpleton but gradually, he understands the realities in the workplace, learns what is expected from a productive worker like him and where is his limit. He tries to overcome challenges, and slowly, he loses patience.

SCENE 1

The scene is inside the swanky campus of American Bank of Goa.

It is a posh building of American bank in the suburbs of Goa where executives commute in cabs of the company. David Gonzales who joined the company is ushered in by a charming female executive Shikha Kulkarni in a hall where over 200 executives are working. Seeing the handsome persona of David, other executives make an eager look; they were giggling simultaneously. David couldn't make out the reason for the giggles at that time.

Shikha: Hi guys and gals, today we have a new joinee, David Gonzales. Give him a warm clap. Now Lalitha Madhuri, the team lead, will help David to unlock the password and give him some training to start. See David, you have to see five applications and sort customer grievances. You are smart; you can do more in the days to come.

Although many clapped their hands, David noticed there was lack of enthusiasm in their clapping. Many were unable to control sarcastic smiles on him. David becomes confused, and his facial expressions show he is worrying about what is in store for him.

Lalitha (in a dominating tone): David you have to undergo training for one week. I will be giving you training, and you need to report to me.

David (submissively): Yes mam.

Lalitha: Don't call me mam. I am Lalitha. Here, we call everyone by names. And you are expected to call everyone by names.

David was given training for one week. It seemed he is faster in learning, understanding client requirements and fits for actual work.

SCENE 2

David is coming regularly with enthusiasm. One week passed in American Bank of Goa. David enters with black pants and a cream shirt.

Lalitha: How are you David now?

David (with oozing confidence): I am good. I have learned the job.

Lalitha: Yes, you have learned fast. Now you have to handle customer queries. Mind it what is essential is not handling mere customer queries in a short time. There is something called AHT (average handling time) to resolve issues; otherwise, you will get minus points. All your conversation and time taken will be recorded.

David (with an artificial smile): Yes, I understand.

David began to open applications and put the earphones on his ears after receiving a briefing from Lalitha. It seems David is excellent in understanding US accent, which makes the team leads happy. By lunch break, David sorted five queries of the client. There was a palpable wonder in the faces of many.

SCENE 3

Another ten days passed. David seems to be smart in his work. There were fewer complaints against him. It was 10.30 am. David goes for a coffee break. He is sitting in the cafeteria of the company. Sadiq Ali enters the cafeteria. He wore a blue printed shirt and blue jeans. David is sipping coffee; he just glances him.

Sadiq: Hello, David.

It seems Sadiq is eager to find a friend in David.

David: Hello. You are Sadiq, aren't you?

Sadiq: Yes, my friend.

Sadiq Ali shakes hands with David and befriends him.

Sadiq: It seems your honeymoon period is over. And you have learned faster than us. Have you undergone any training?

David: We are Anglo-Indians who are fluent in English, and since my

childhood, I used to watch Hollywood movies. This enabled me to understand American accent better. I never knew I would work in call centres; I fancied about a government job like probationary officer where work will be less challenging.

Sadiq (interrupting): I had a real struggle for weeks together after I joined this company. Whatever mistakes we make, it will be recorded and will reflect on our pay, more importantly, career. Although many are highly qualified here, a few could understand American accent and have problems called ‘mother tongue influence’. I am struggling to get out of that. If the Americans understand the receiver is from India, they shower abuses on us. We just grin and bear it.

David (with confidence): I think I won’t face similar problems like you.

Sadiq (with an expression of wonder): That is why many wondered at the way you work. You understand client requirement faster, and you resolve their issues quickly. But be careful, show only 65% of your talent. Otherwise, you have to work like donkeys. They will dump more work on you.

David: Oh really! I don’t think so. The HR lady Shikha behaved very warmly to me. To me, she is a benevolent HR executive.

Sadiq (with an expression of shock): I think I can trust you. Please don’t share what transpired between you and me.

David: Sir, I won’t tell others what transpired between you and me.

Sadiq (in a warning tone): Don’t believe that woman; she runs with the hare and hunts with the hound. You will come to know more in a few weeks after careful observation.

David pauses to think. Sadiq exits.

SCENE 4

One month passed. David appears to be doing his job very fast, cleared customer queries. In the post-lunch session, he was surprised to see Sadiq sitting nearby his workstation.

David (surprised): How come you shift your place?

Sadiq (appearing desperate): The HR gave orders to sit beside you and learn which I feel most insulting. You know I am senior to you. In government jobs, this is impossible. But in private, everything is merit-oriented. I have one more month time to speed up my client resolution

skills. Otherwise, I have to leave this job.

(David thinks for a while, is this because of my performance that Sadiq is getting affected?)

David (coming back from thinking): How long have you been working here?

Sadiq: Almost one year.

Sadiq sees an email and angrily mutters 'Shaitan aagaya' (the devil is coming).

David observes the reason behind his murmuring is a client mail asking for immediate attention.

Sadiq is busy with checking applications.

It was nearing 6 pm. Women were first to get up and leave. The new shift came. Both David and Sadiq left for the day.

By all means, it was a good day for David.

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