

Social Studies 10 Khawater: Organ Harvesting

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Social 10-1

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June 9 2020

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My father was a kind-hearted man who did everything in his power to provide a good life for me and my younger sister. He was a hard-working man who switched jobs regularly as a result of companies lowering the wages as the workers had no sort of education, which involved him. Here in Egypt, it isn't a norm for many kids to go to school but my father believed that education is the key to a prosperous future as he lived the life of a man who had achieved no sort of education. In my life, everything was inordinately excellent, no stress, no worries. This was all up till one day my father came back home extremely weak with 25000 Egyptian Pounds, I had never witnessed this substantial amount of cash in our possession. From what I recall, 25000 Egyptian Pounds would require at least 5 months of hard labour unless the work required from the job was dangerous and strenuous, even if that was the case I couldn't think of any job involving this significant amount of money. And the only physical peculiarity I noticed with my father was that he had a scar in his upper abdominal area. And since that scar appeared his health started to exacerbate, to a point where it led him to encounter the pale death. And who knew that the source of income that led him to his death would be what would cover his funeral costs.

Dealing with my father's demise was mentally arduous. After all, his memories kept rushing into my mind like the sand rushing into your face during a sandstorm. He gave up all the pleasures of life in order for me and my younger sister to experience those pleasures. But what affected me the most was that I wouldn't be able to fulfill my father's only desire from me. His desire for me to complete my education. Essentially, it was up to me, a 16-year-old, to provide for my family after my father.

After a week or so, I knew that I had to find a job in order to support my family and that grieving for my father wouldn't bring him back. The only place that I knew where I'd be able to find a job was the marketplace. The marketplace, a place consisting of various shops and companies that are always in need of more employers, even though the pay is really low, allows one to put a meal on the table, a roof over their heads, clothes on their body, and in some cases, schooling for their children/siblings.

The next morning I roused up early and headed towards the marketplace. As I walked through the marketplace I came upon many advertisements about jobs, but most of those jobs were intense labour jobs that exploited the workers while paying an unbelievably low wage which was contradictory to the amount of work one put in to achieve that pay. But there was one job that looked promising, a call center job that paid 4 times the average pay. The only thing one needed to work there was a grade 9 education, which I had completed and another aspect of it was to pass an oral interview.

The notion of attaining 4 times the average pay was like giving an abundant supply of sugar to a 6-year-old to me. It sounded too good to be true too so I called the number on the advertisement and inquisitively asked: "How can I sign up for the job".

A man with a deep voice responded saying "You simply need to fulfill the educational requirement and pass an interview. I'll pick you up tomorrow at this time from the location of the advertisement.". The call lasted less than a minute as the man ended the call immediately after finishing what he had said.

“Pick you up”, I thought, well, in the end, it would be easier to be given a ride then walk to the location of the interview. But the thought that the man didn’t allow me to present a couple of my remaining imperative questions filled me with loathing towards him.

I woke up early the next morning to prepare myself and expunge all the nervousness from the root of my heart. With my education assessment proudly sitting in my hand, I showed up at the advertisement location. After a few minutes of sitting on a bench in front of the advertisement waiting to be picked up, a fancy white pearly car stopped at the advertisement location.

“The interview will begin in a while, hurry up and sit in the car”, said a man wearing an elegant suit.

Sitting in the car, a hunch came to my mind that one day I’ll be able to purchase this same exact car if I pass the interview.

After a while, the car stopped at an isolated place surrounded by trees the length of mountains where there stood a single obsolete building. From the outside, it looked more of an abandoned building than an office building but my subconscious convinced me that ‘judge a book by its cover’. As I entered the building I realized my subconscious hadn’t been wrong as the interior looked much more promising as an office building than any other building that I have wandered upon. The building had a cozy environment, with fresh coats of grey paint sitting on the walls, a front desk where a cheerful woman was seated at, a functioning elevator, and a sense of warmth emitting from the people and the building itself. It was an exemplary work environment that many would crave for. The pay was above perfect, the people seemed nice

even though there weren't many of them, the job wouldn't be too hard even if it would be hard the pay would make up for it and much more.

“Head up to the second floor wherein your interview will be held.”, said the man wearing the elegant suit.

I walked towards the elevator feeling featherless and hopped inside the elevator leading me to floor 2. The room was ahead of me, while I looked back when I believed that this job would come with its cons, but standing there I couldn't think of any. As I strolled inside the room the first thing that met my eyes was a well-dressed man sitting on a chair. He seemed like a captious man who'd no one would have the temerity to question his decisions. He politely asked me to sit while he went over my educational assessment and without asking anything else about me he said “You're hired”.

Was this true or was I dreaming? Wasn't there going to be an interview I thought to myself? I became awestruck by his words making me feel like I was floating, I had never experienced this feeling before. A feeling that brought great comfort in both my heart and mind. A smile came to my mind thinking that I might've set a world record on the fastest interview ever.

The man's lips started moving again and said: “We'll just need a medical examination in order to compensate for any of your health issues, you can head down to the basement wherein we have a checkup facility.”.

A checkup facility within the workspace, I thought to myself, now that's fascinating. I hopped back in the elevator down towards the main floor. The elevator didn't have an option to go towards the basement so I had to put my leg muscles into use by taking the stairs and once I

reached the basement my eyes were glued to the various petrifying tools. Sharp. Exotic. Peculiar. The basement looked more of a surgery room than a checkup facility. It consisted of equipment that only a well off company would be able to afford but the lighting was dim and the walls were grey made out of solid concrete while there were stains on both the floor and some of the tools and equipment.

My eyes caught on to a peculiar sight and that was the medical staff. It consisted of multiple people but the peculiarity lay in the fact that the person who drove me here, and the interviewer both were a part of the medical staff

Before I was able to question this peculiarity a short man appeared in front of my eyes and said, “I’m the doctor here and before starting the checkup you must drink this fluid”.

The Doctor had a deep voice, it was as if I had heard the same voice before. After focusing on the man who proclaimed he was a Doctor I realized that looks can be highly deceptive.

“Here you go, and remember to drink all of it,” he said as he handed me a cup with a blue liquid in it emitting a strong minty taste, “and if you fail to drink all of it then the checkup won’t be possible, resulting in you not being able to get the job”.

From the fear of losing the job I rapidly sipped away the fluid which had a minty taste to it. After drinking all of the fluid I proceeded to take a seat. While walking towards the seat thinking how this was the last step in order to get the job, my head became heavy, it became dizzy, and my vision became blurry. Suddenly, I blacked out.

The next day I rose up in a bed, with an IV drip running through my body, failing to recall anything that happened the previous day while feeling extremely fragile like glass. The

best word that came to my mind in order to describe the place was a hospital. There was something pinching me on my stomach, it felt like tiny insects eating away my flesh within my body. I lifted my shirt up and the first thing that my eyes glared at was my stomach. It had the same scar as my father. Thoughts of death kept rushing through my mind. Was I going to die like my father? What will happen to my family? Will people remember me once I'm gone?

“You finally have awoken,”, said a Doctor sitting on a chair beside me. “As you may have already known that one of your Kidneys is missing while the other one is highly infected...”.

Before she could finish my brain painted a bewildered face. Did she really mean it, how could one of my Kidney be missing?

“Did you donate one of your kidneys?”, asked the Doctor in perplexion.

Did the Doctor really mean it or was it some kind of joke, why would I donate my Kidney. My mind was full of questions supported by little answers. Then it hit me, the advertisement, the car, the job, the blue fluid. Was the job opportunity a subterfuge? Has my kidney been harvested? Had my father's kidney been harvested?

Then the expected words came out of the Doctor's mouth, “You'll have to take a couple of meds once every so often and a couple of them every single day for the rest of your life.”.

The words were like an expected atom bomb dropped on me. It wasn't the fact that I had to take different medicines for the rest of my life, it was that these medicines would cost money which was scarce.

“The only possession you had with you when you were admitted in the hospital was this orange envelope”, said the Doctor realizing I had no answers to her questions.

On the front of the envelope it was written, For Mr. Mostafa. As I ineluctably opened the envelope, my hands were met with cash within the envelope. To be precise 25000 Egyptian pounds. 25000 Egyptian pounds for a kidney, was that the price of my kidney?

Don't these people know that Abu Sirmah narrated that "The Messenger of Allah (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him) said: "Whoever harms a Muslim, Allah will harm him, and whoever causes hardship to a Muslim, Allah will cause hardship to him" " ("The hadith "Whoever harms [others], Allah will harm him, and whoever causes hardship [to others] Allah will cause hardship to him" - Islam Question & Answer", 2020)

The End.

References

- Q&A, I. (2020, March 22). The hadith "Whoever harms [others], Allah will harm him, and whoever causes hardship [to others] Allah will cause hardship to him" - Islam Question & Answer. Retrieved from <https://islamqa.info/en/answers/285915/the-hadith-whoever-harms-others-allah-will-harm-him-and-whoever-causes-hardship-to-others-allah-will-cause-hardship-to-him>