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THE CURSES OF UNEMPLOYMENT**Razia Shabeena**

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Abstract:It has been raining cats and dogs. Flashes of lightning followed by big roars of thunderbolt all indicate an imminent deluge. I keep all windows and doors of the house closed and in a state of tranquillity retrieve to bed unusually tonight. Repeated knocks at the door are heard. A stern voice of command echoes before mom could ask me to open,

Certainly it is dad, who makes his entry after a month as usual. Now something like tempest is inevitable at home. The very purpose of his visit on first of every month is to extract the hard earned money from mom. How he became liquor-addict and why he absolves responsibility ...I am unable to find answers. I became restless and hide myself in a blanket.

Mom hurriedly reaches the threshold and opens the door only to acknowledge his curses. Tradition and honour make her endurable and she assists him to get in. Lights are off in the visiting room and so dad looks unclear. As usually he is in drunken state.

Keyword:Curses , Unemployment , liquor-addict , tranquillity.

INTRODUCTION:

I slowly tend to remove the blanket and look around. There is lighting in the kitchen cum dining room where he is made comfortable. He asks something and mom promptly replies. Though I am keen on their conversation, I am unable to hear clearly. Most probably all his seriousness should have been about my "unemployment"

He breaks several cups and saucers. The splintered ones on the floor indicate the climax of his anger. His immediate presence in my room shatters all my nerves. Though I hate his attitude and behaviour, I respect him. But he is so ignorant of my instincts with the increased beatings of my heart I prepare myself to accept his showers of abuses.

"Get up idiot..! You parasite and unemployed rogue, what for you obtained an M.A., degree..." he goes on with his wild curses cumulatively. He does not stop there and kicks on my hip with all his force.

I get up swiftly from bed without knowing what to do. Mom is helpless and sobs silently at the corner.

Even decency does not demand him utter such an obscene and vulgar words in her presence. There is dead silence all around. I determine to be firm...in the sense to protect my self-respect and dignity which I cannot expect while being at home. My unemployment adds fuel to the fire in which mom is often made a scapegoat

I decide to go out and venture something...!
"Ding...dong; ding...dong; ding...dong; ding...dong;" the wall-clock strikes exactly four, indicating that the dawn is nearing though not in my life.

I set out with some hopes and courage bowing my head for the circumstances. The rains abruptly become drizzles with the onset of monsoon, the winter is also severe... perhaps I may have lost vigour and immunity to bear with it.

With the sagging spirit and bleeding soul, I walk along the main road...I am an optimist. But optimism itself loses significance with the failures. I embrace securing a job which can bring me fortunes like humour and prestige at least at home.

The mutilated degree certificate in my hand with multi-fold, speaks the truth that how many occasions it is being presented, subsequently proving my sustained futile efforts.

These feelings of frustration give my no relief but drive me mad at times. All my frivolous thoughts came to a standstill, when an imported speeding car makes a screeching halt behind me.

I turn back to look at in a fear but the flash from the headlights blinds me. The driver who gets out of the car comes closer to me. He may perhaps warn me to observe traffic sense.

What a surprise! He hugs me in pleasure.

"Hello Pradeep...! How are you dude..?"

After a long pause, I recollect something. Yes, he is Prasad; a good-old friend of mine in the college; indeed my classmate; a victim of poverty and a dropout too.

"Hi dude, can't you recognise me..?" he sounds didactic.

"No Prasad...by no means; I am just immersed in reminiscences; that's all"...feeble words flow through my lips.

He takes me into the car and after making me comfortable, lights up a 555 fag.

"How about you?" he offers me one.

"No, thanks...!"

My eyes make a survey inside the car, a few contraband two-in-ones, several packs of 555 brand, costly magazines and empty bottles of foreign liquors... all seem to tell take of his status.

What a significant change! I am still in rumination.

Tuning a recorder, he continues.

“That’s all right Pradeep, what are you doing now...? I mean your job, etc.”

As I sincerely take out the degree certificate from my pocket and show him, some coins fall down.

“Still I believe this” I reply.

His peal of laughter gives me no meaning, yet he continues...

“See young man, I am leading a happy life with an average monthly income of 30,000/- bucks, because I do not believe degrees and diplomas. I consider them only as token of educational qualification. I sincerely set my belief on “God-fathers” who are the makers of better morrows. I follow what they say and do what they expect of me...that’s all”

He was once afraid of words and searching for the same but now he delivers lectures. He goes on...

“Even now, it is not too late to mend your ways of approach to life. Give up your ideology and straightforwardness. Follow me patiently and position and possession will come to your feet.”

I am totally perplexed. I ask him what he would go for me, if i adhere to his piece of advice.

“Yes Pradeep, there are many a business, which bring you fame and name besides wealth... for instance ...smuggling, counterfeit-currency, etc...”

He thrusts a visiting card into my hand and asks me to see him, if I wish.

Something strange irks at the bottom of my heart. Is that the only way to earn money...? What does my education means...? Can't I lead a life without harming the society in which I live...?

All these queries become endless without answers. After a couple of minutes I alight from the car saying good bye to him.

Now I sharply react and think over the issues.

“Men of his stamp are nation's evils. If they are let live, they can't let others live happily and peacefully. A little spark of this kind is sufficed to set the nation ablaze, which can obliterate whole of the humanity that still believes and lives with moral ethical and core values but with different ideologies.”

I wish to be ideal, even at the cost employment and wealth. I indecisively go ahead towards an unknown destination...deriving a new enlightenment in me...

“What appears to be the end may really be a new beginning...!”

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