

Thank You Mr. Secretary

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I grew up in a family of sport lovers. My father adored tennis--he was a national champion--and my mother was a badminton player. After school, our whole family met at the tennis coaching centre. My mother would come from home dragging along a bag that had everything from hot milk and fruits to tennis clothes. My younger sister, Reeta, and I would run all the way to the court right after school. We would sit together on the side bench and try to finish our homework while waiting for our turn.

As a teenager, I travelled all over the country playing competitive tennis. I didn't have much money then and had to travel in unreserved train compartments. The travel would be exhausting as I hardly ever got a place to sit. However, the benefit of third class travel was that students like me got the ticket at half the cost. But, it was hard to get hold of the form that would allow me to do so.

The Secretary of the Tennis Association issued these forms and was a very important person. He liked to prove his importance by making applicants wait. Sometimes, I wasted an entire day waiting to see him.

One hot afternoon during a match, my long plaits kept coming in my way preventing me from concentrating on my game. I just could not take it any longer.



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I had homework, exams, tennis and often extra fitness sessions but had to sit in a queue which never seemed to move. I would beat my fists angrily on the bench feeling helpless.

On one such occasion, after waiting for hours in a queue, when I finally managed to see the Secretary, I couldn't hold myself back anymore. I told him in a serious tone, "I have learned from you that I must always respect the needs of others. When I grow up, I will never make anyone wait like this. I will value others' time." The Secretary was furious and can you guess what he did?

I was already a National Junior Champion in tennis and as was the norm, I was waiting to be nominated to play at Wimbledon. It had been my dream to participate in this prestigious event. But the Secretary chose someone else instead of me. I felt sorry for myself, but decided to work harder on my studies instead. I soon began to top my class.

Today, when I look back at my life, I thank the Secretary for teaching me such a valuable lesson. He helped me become a better police officer who values people's time.

THE END



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Vocabulary

(All meanings given in context to the story)

Adore	-	Like very much
Exhausted	-	Become very tired
Furious	-	Very angry
Hardly	-	Almost nothing
Helpless	-	Unable to do something by yourself
Nominate	-	Recommend someone for a role, prize or position
Norm	-	Do something in the accepted way
Occasion	-	A time at which an event happens
Session	-	Duration of time taken for an activity
Tone	-	The quality of your voice that expresses emotions



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