



By Anton Chekhov

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Think About It

1. Has Lushkoff become a beggar by circumstance or by choice?

Answer:

Lushkoff became a beggar by circumstance. Formerly, he sang in a Russian choir, but was sent away for drunkenness. This led him to beg.

2. What reasons does he give to Sergei for his telling lies?

Answer:

Lushkoff said that since he was fired for being an alcoholic, he had to tell lies. And, if he told the truth no one would give him anything.

3. Is Lushkoff a willing worker? Why, then, does he agree to chop wood for Sergei?

Answer:

No, Lushkoff is not a willing worker. He agrees to chop wood for Sergei not because he was hungry and wanted work but because of his pride and shame and since he had been trapped by his own words. His strength had been undermined by drinking too much vodka and he was unhealthy and did not feel the slightest inclination to do any work.

4. Sergei says, "I am happy that my words have taken effect." Why does he say so? Is he right in saying this?

Answer:

When Sergei got Lushkoff to work for him the first time, he wasn't a willing worker. But after chopping wood for Sergei and helping him move houses, Sergei noticed that Lushkoff had developed a willingness to work. On seeing this, Sergei felt content that his advice had brought Lushkoff on the right path and that he wouldn't have to beg again for a living. If Sergei had not helped Lushkoff, he's have lied on the streets begging.

5. Lushkoff is earning thirty five roubles a month. How is he obliged to Sergei for this?

Answer:

Lushkoff was obliged to Sergei because if he had not come to Sergei, then he might still have been calling himself a teacher or a student. He would have been begging. By listening to Sergei, he had changed his ways. He was a notary and earned thirty five roubles a month.

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